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TIME CRISIS

*It's showtime as your PlayStation delivers you arcade perfect shooting thrills. Lock and load to page 18 for your Mean Machines PlayStation **EXCLUSIVE** preview of this brilliant Namco Virtua Cop killer!*

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COMMAND & CONQUER

IT AIN'T 'ALF HOT MUM!

The game that blasted the rather dull world of PC gaming marches onto PlayStation. Get those troops on parade and head for the front line, alternatively known as **page 32.** *'Tenshun you 'orrible lot!*

SYNDICATE WARS 78

WAR! WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

Bullfrog bounce back with their rather grim look at the future, Syndicate Wars. Slide aboard that hover-car and warp towards a Bladerunner style future with our preview on **page 78.** *Time to die...*

FIFA '97 28

FOOTBALLL'S COMIN' HOME!

Its got the FIFA name, its got the backing of Motty, Des and Andy Gray. It's got the moves of Newcastle's David Ginola, but has it the bite to tackle the Actuas and Olympics of this world. Turn to **page 28** *for a seat in the directors' box and your free FIFA programme!*

IT'S TOTAL PANDEMONIUM! 74

WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

You've read the review, you've eyed the sexy shots, now's your chance to WIN! a flippin' state-of-the-art camcorder and relive those moments of Pandemonium! Plus, we've copies of this top game to give away too. Spin to **page 74** *now for free frolics.*

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NBA JAM EXTREME

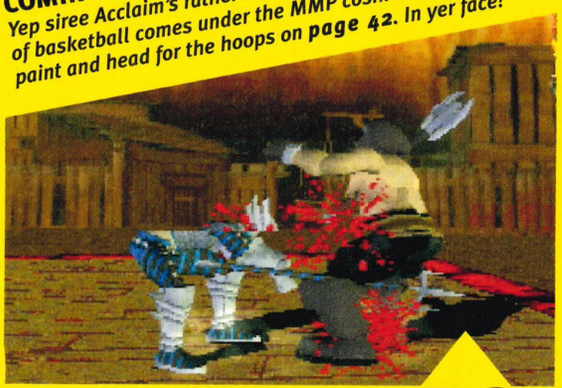
COMIN' FROM DOWNTOWN!

Yep siree Acclaim's rather surreal look at the wacky world of basketball comes under the MMP cosh. Get outta the paint and head for the hoops on **page 42**. *In yer face!*

RIOT

ROLLERBALL COMES TO YER PLAYSTATION!

Pysgnosis fast-forward into the future with their glimpse at the sport of tomorrow. Turn to **page 82** *for more zipping of lycra and fisticuffs in our three page preview.*



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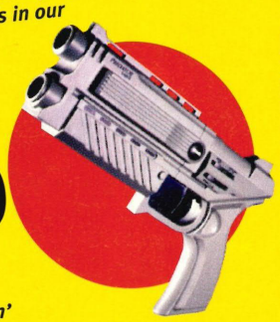
IRON AND BLOOD

D&D GETS GBH PDQ! A OK?

Time to buckle up that chainmail, pick up thine axe and head for the fields of combat because Acclaim have gone and added a whole new twist to the beat-'em-up genre. If you don't believe us punch your way to **page 58** *for our magical review!*



TOYS FOR THE BOYS!

70

PERIPHERALS A PLENTY!

What wheel to buy for drivin' games, what pad to use for those beat-'em-up fests and what gun to use on those crims from games like Die-hard Tril and Time Crisis. ***PLUS*** *Your chance to win the peripheral of your choice for FREE! in our top compo!*

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SPECIAL THANKS TO:
Steve Merrett, Guy Pearce and Namco for the Time Crisis stuff, Gav for the top compo, Simon Smith-Wright for the product, all the peripheral people, God, Allah or whatsoever devine being looks over us for getting us through alive, Warner Interactive for lunch – sorry it's all over you're a nice bunch, Steve McKevitt and Gremlin for the sodding talking Santas that were nice for the first couple of times but wear thin after the 43rd time of hearing. Extreme Facilities for the camcorder, Cathy Campos for Syndicate, Steve's mum for letting him stay out late, Keith at Telstar for being a lanky streak of wee-wee, and everyone else who we know!

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PRINTED: Cooper Clegg • **COLOUR BY:** Sarah-Jane Leavey & Sarah Best-est • **DISTRIBUTED BY:** Frontline • Printed in the UK •

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SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BACKORDERS:
Tower Publishing, Tower House, Sovereign Park, Lathkill Street, Market Harborough, Leics. Subscription Hotline (9:30-5:30 Mon-Fri): (01858) 468888. All subscription rates include postage and packaging. The annual subscription rate for one year is: United Kingdom and BFPO: £23.50; Eire: £23.50 ; Europe Airmail: £35.00; Rest of World Airmail (Zones 1&2): £53.00 ; Rest of World Surface Mail: £30.00.

BACK ISSUES
U.K. £3.50 Overseas £6.00

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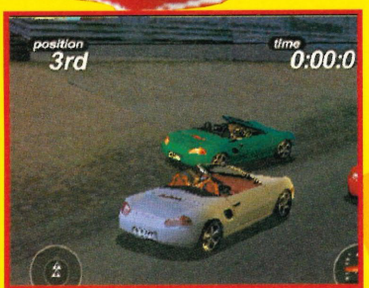
AND REMEMBER KIDS...
A bird in the hand is worth two in the bike shed.

PSST!

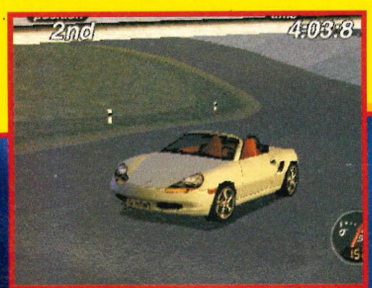
SONY

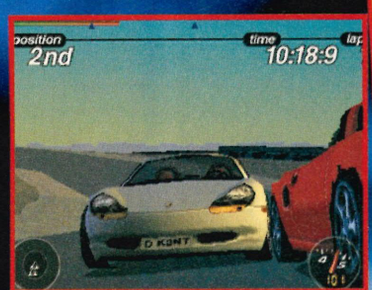
LATEST GAMES UPDATE!

Those beavers down at Sony have been busy to say the least and lucky old us got to have a sneaky look at the very latest games up for release next year. Please read on and quake...



Readers is this the most beautiful polygon car in the world or what?

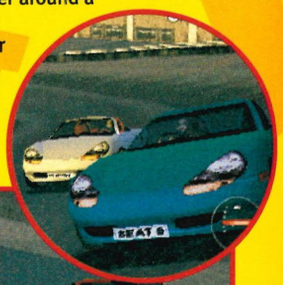


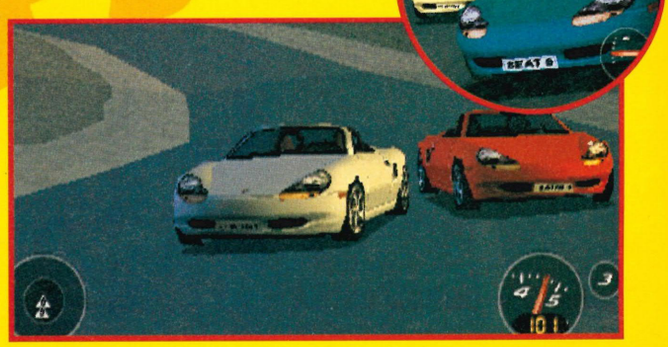


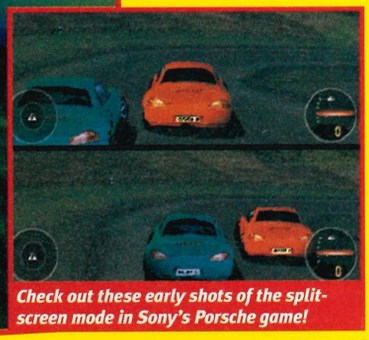
I wonder how many miles to the gallon this little baby can do? Not many I'll bet!

PORSCHE BOXSTER UPDATE!

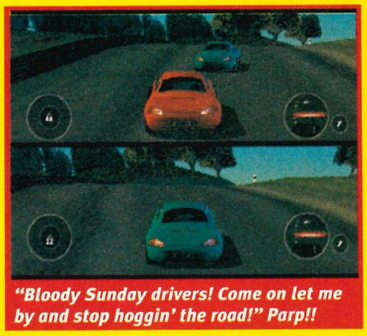
You'll all have seen the very early shots of Sony's Porsche licence, well we got to actually take the dream car for a spin and see how that baby feels. The first thing to say is that the way the car handles is damn brilliant, having a real driver's feel to it. Already you can tell that the skill will be to learn how to powerslide your vehicle around some real hairy bends. The car itself is most impressive, and is undoubtedly the most detailed and accurate polygon model motor yet to appear on the 'Station. So far the only track close to completion is the Stuttgart test circuit where Porsche actually put all their vehicles through their paces, but we also got to take the Boxster bird-puller around a mountain track. The game will also boast a two-player split-screen option – horizontal or vertical – and a very comprehensive in-car stereo system for you to pump up while the wind rushes through your hair! More as it pulls into the motorway services.







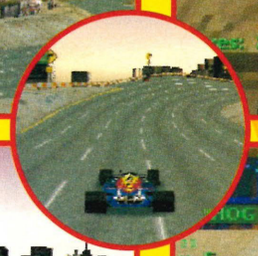
Check out these early shots of the split-screen mode in Sony's Porsche game!

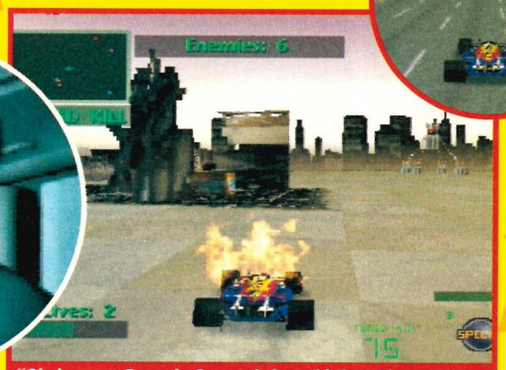


"Bloody Sunday drivers! Come on let me by and stop hoggin' the road!" Parp!!

MORE HEAVY METAL! TWISTED METAL WORLD TOUR

The excellent Twisted Metal returns for a second outing, and the news is that it's excellent! You'll remember that, though the original was great fun, the battle tracks were a little limited. Well that's all been put right because the courses, set in such places as Hong Kong Harbour, LA, Paris, Antarctica, Columbia and Moscow, are absolutely huge. And not just your freedom of movement's been enhanced because you can now actually destroy enemy vehicles by setting things like avalanches off using your weapons! There's also teleports, a dozen new cars and a multiple weapons release system – a touch of the combos. Add three secret levels and you've got a whole lot of game on yer hands!



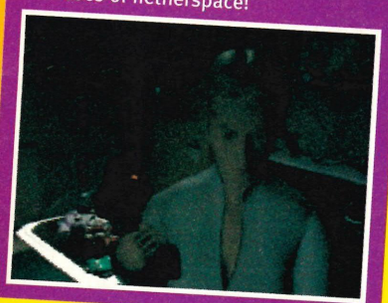


"Oh dear, me Formula One car's been hit by a Flame power-up. I think I'd better call the flippin' RAC... quickly!"

Split-screen goings-on as we take to the wild streets of LA. Hold on homey let's rock around this huge freeway!

ENEMY ZERO! D2 OR 2D?

Remember D the creepy Acclaim adventure romp starring Laura Lewis? Well, poor old Laura's in trouble again, but this time she finds herself hurtling back to Earth in a huge spaceship, the S.S Warp. All seven of the crew members lie in cryogenic slumber until the ship is suddenly disturbed by an extremely violent shock. Yep, it's an Alien clone type of affair, but unlike the first D adventure game, Enemy Zero there are Doom type sequences that run at real-time in conjunction with click on object type puzzle sections. More news as it emerges from the dark, cold recesses of netherspace!



BREAKER-BREAKER FREDDIE LAKER!

Since we reviewed Ocean's Breakpoint Tennis title the development team working on this racquet-'em-up have added improvements that we thought you should be aware of. Being smart cookies, and realising that they weren't going to get out of the 70-odd percent score zone, they've added a couple of extra characters and improved the AI and speed of the players. Fair play. Not wanting you to miss out on a half-decent game we've decided to fill you in, and thus should shove an extra couple of percent on the score, making it tip the MMP scale at just under 80%. New balls per-lease!

PISTE OFF? NO IT'S DEFINITELY ON!

Is Cool Boarders a new game about trendy people who don't go home when they've finished school? Is it pants. It's the first snowboarding simulation to appear on any super console and allows you to experience the thrill of whizzing down a snow covered mountain without actually, er.. whizzing down a snow covered mountain. Cool Boarders goes out on the piste in January 1997 and, fashion fans, not only can you race around at breakneck speeds trying to avoid falling off cliffs, and performing all manner of fancy skids, tricks and jumps, but you also get to choose what clothes you're going to do it in! Mind you wrap up now, it looks chilly out. If in doubt check out our Import Review featured in issue 2 which scored a mammoth 88%!

"TRULY EXCELLENT IN EVERY WAY".
'PlayStation Plus 90%'

"... full of mystery and suspense".
'Mean Machines PlayStation 90%'

PlayStation

DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

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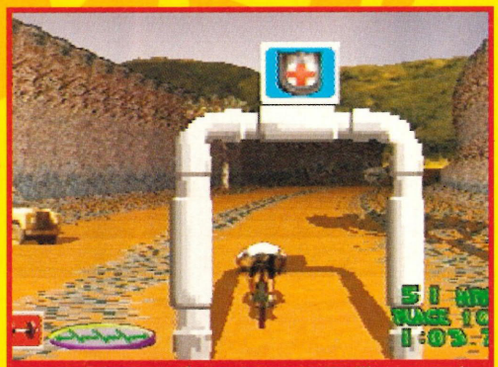
PSST!

EXTREME SPORTS RETURNS!

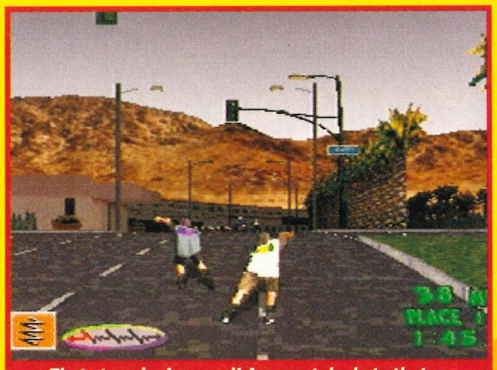
The world of 'danger' sports returns exclusively to PlayStation with the advent of Extreme Sports 2. This time out your thrill seekers will find themselves in-line skating around Vegas, skateboarding through the streets of LA – no easy task , mountain biking through the mountains of Africa and snowboarding the slopes of Japan. There are 12 violent levels in total for you to race around and they all feature interactive landscapes that let you do such things as control traffic lights. Sony have also introduced a power-up system and a split-screen option so you can race head-to-head with a mate.



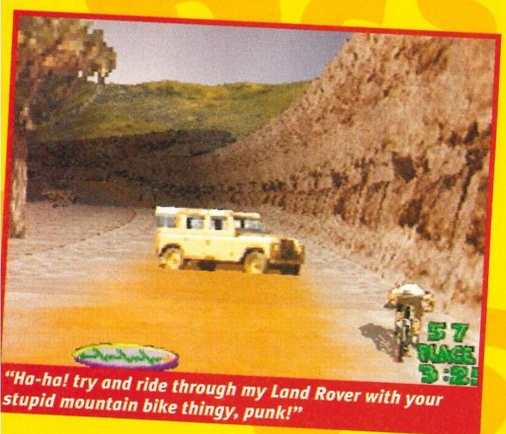
"Pedal man! Go faster damn you. You'll never catch Chris Boardman at this flippin' rate!"

Typical. You're out for a pleasant bit of boarding and before you know it you run into blimmin' roadworks!

How violent can someone in a pair of rollerskates actually be? I suppose if you threw 'em at someone.



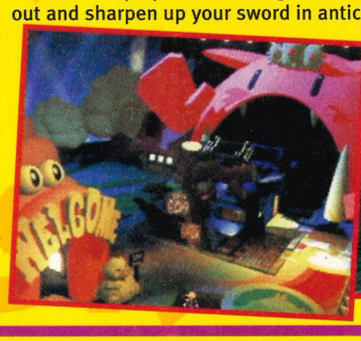
That stop sign's on red! Anyone take bets that a dirty great bus is going to crush one of these pair?

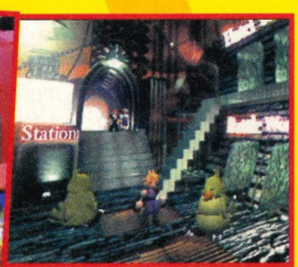


"Ha-ha! try and ride through my Land Rover with your stupid mountain bike thingy, punk!"

VIRGIN IN FANTASY HEAVEN!

As more shots of Square' brilliant Final Fantasy VII emerge through the games grapevine, news has emerged, at last, that the game is to be released in the UK. Yep, all you RPG lovers can thank Virgin for having the good sense to snap up this stunning licence and give us what could be the RPG of the decade. check these new shots out and sharpen up your sword in anticipation!





THE PRIME SUSPECT!
SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2 TURBO

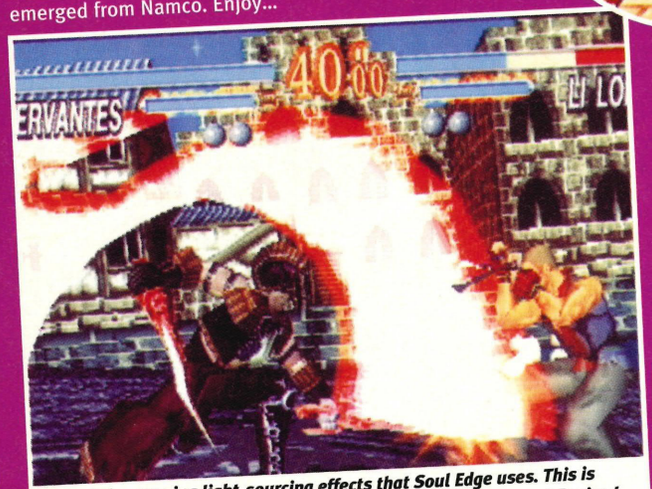
"Awright sarge, what have we got here then?"
"Says 'es an addict guv."
"What, another one. What's 'e on then? Shoot-em-up is it?"
"No, guv. Super Puzzle Fighter II the new Capcom puzzler that combines a kind of Tetris-like puzzle game with the Street Fighter characters."
"Bleedin' 'ell, and I thought I'd heard everything. What kind of sick stunts are these Capcom people going to come up with next?"
"Yeah guv, it's terrible. And this geezer reckons he's addicted to it. Says the Street Fighter characters add an interesting and unusual dimension to the traditional puzzle game, which itself is an engrossing and addictive experience."
"Have you swallowed a dictionary sergeant?"
"Sorry, guv. Didn't have time for lunch!"

Yes, well after that little diversion behind the scenes of The Bill, let's examine a few facts; Virgin are publishing SPF2 in the UK with a '97 release date, when you set off gem chains your 'baby' SF characters perform animated moves on one another and there's also combo moves in there too. The characters for SPF2, as you'd expect are the usual suspects.

Link those gems Ken me old son and show this stupid kid exactly who's king of Super Puzzle Fighter 2 Turbo.

SOUL EDGE SWINGS IN!

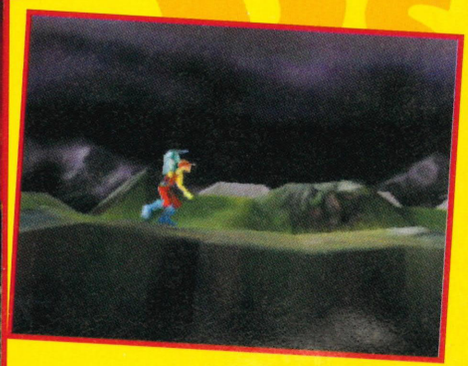
It's not too long before custodians of Japan can enjoy the thrills and spills of Soul Edge. The good news is that Sony are definitely going to give it the UK release it so richly deserves, but it'll go under the name of Soul Blade. As we write, new Soul Edge/Blade shots have emerged from Namco. Enjoy...



Look at the amazing light-sourcing effects that Soul Edge uses. This is going to be one HUGE game. Keep your eyes peeled for an Import Review!

WILD NINES V POT NOODLES!

Time to buy a bigger size of trouser, 'cos Wild Nines is being trumpeted as just about the best thing since the Pot Noodle. Interplay say the game's a cross between a cinematic 3D platform and R-Type and features a head-blending 60,000 hand-made animations all in real-time 3D. Which is a lot when you consider Earthworm Jim had just 3,000 frames. Anyway, that's enough boring stats, when's it out? April, mate. So you've got plenty of time to save up for those new trousers.



PLAYSTATION STORMS THE CHARTS!

You probably read with some interest our monthly rundown of the PlayStation specific chart that we feature within the pages of MMP, but what you don't normally get a glimpse of is the overall CD-ROM chart. Well the great news is that the PlayStation is storming ahead of every format – even PC – at the moment. The overall top five is totally dominated by the following Sony games; Tomb Raider, Soviet Strike, Crash Bandicoot, Tekken 2 and F1. How's that for the real power of the PlayStation! Incidentally, the highest Saturn product, Daytona USA CCE, could only trundle into the number 11 slot! Chug-chug!

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PSST!

Even Robin Hood couldn't have fired these little gems into our board. Here's what's out and delayed this month!

MARCH

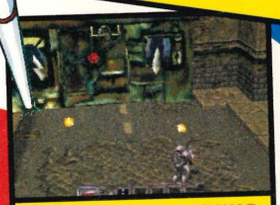
SYNDICATE WARS
Although not yet reviewed, Bullfrog and EA are confident that this will be out by March. Expect this to be a storming conversion as our review next issue will show!
OUT: MARCH

FEBRUARY

COOL BOARDERS
Whip out yer ironing board and hit those slopes as Sony gears up Cool Boarders for release. This could be the surprise title of the year.
OUT:FEBRUARY

TOBAL NO. 1
Originally coded by uaresoft in Japan, Sony e snapped up the rights this smart beat-'em-up d have a possible Feb release. Coolio!
OUT: FEBRUARY

JANUARY



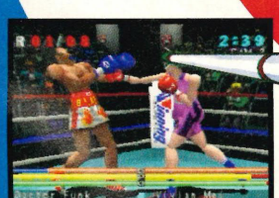
CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR
We'll have a full review of Konami's latest upgrade to the PlayStation next ish. It's even got a 3D bit, where you have to wear some of those silly glasses!
OUT: JANUARY

OUT NOW

X2
Everyone quiet please... can you here that? The sound of X2 hitting the bottom of the pan! Bit of a stinker as our 71% showed, so I'd steer clear of this if I were you!
OUT: NOW

DIE HARD TRILOGY
Finally, after more delays than British Rail, Die Hard is out there! Even Mulder and Sculley would have had trouble working out why this was delayed!
OUT: NOW

IRON AND BLOOD
Egads! Where did this come from! It sneaked in through the back door and jumped onto the shelf before we could bat an eyelid! Scored 89% this very issue, so have a look!
OUT: NOW



VICTORY BOXING
JVC convert their Saturn title to PlayStation and our favourable 84% suggests that they made a pretty good job of it. Expect a January release fight fans!
OUT: JANUARY

JANUARY

MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY
Was due to be released at the same time as Die Hard, but has been put back by GT until January! Kombat fans will be ripping each others arms off in anticipation!
OUT: JANUARY

RELOADED
Slip sliding away! Gremlin's potential monster sequel is finally shaping up and is looking set for a possible February release! Hoorah!
OUT: FEBRUARY

BROKEN HELIX
Oooh dear. I sense a bit of a delay here! We had a preview version of this in months ago, but it has now slipped back to March. D'oh! And D'oh again!
OUT: MARCH

HMV
KNOW HMV • KNOW GAMES

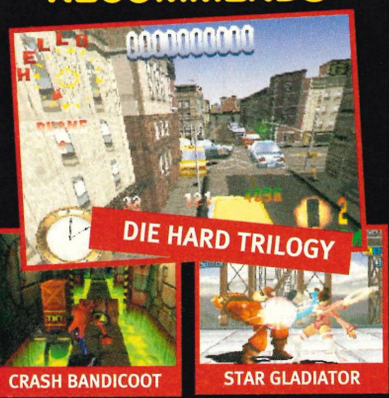
HMV CHARTS

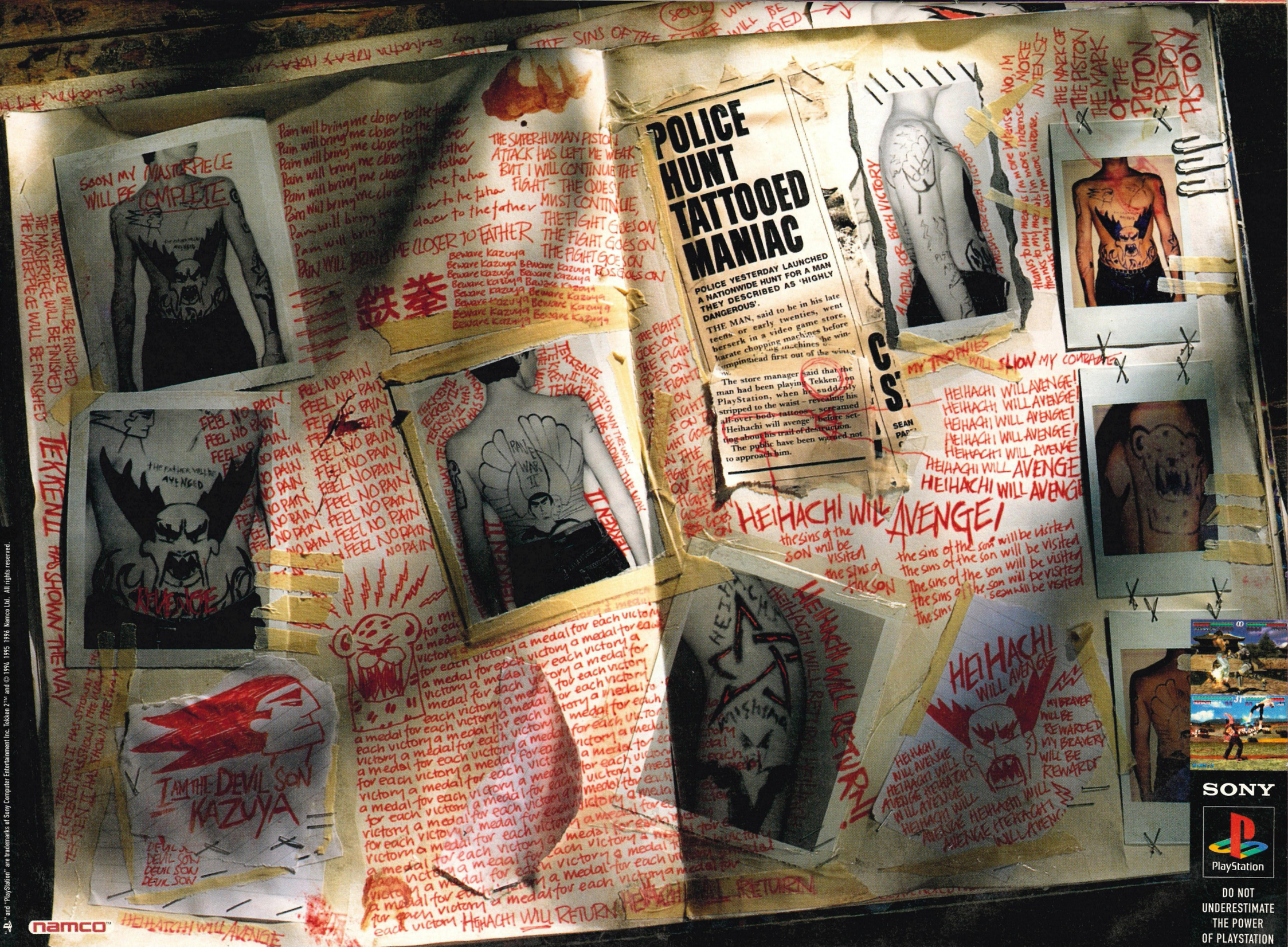
1.	NEW	TOMB RAIDER
2.	NEW	SOVIET STRIKE
3.	NEW	CRASH BANDICOOT
4.	▼	TEKKEN 2
5.	▼	FORMULA 1
6.	▼	WIPEOUT 2097
7.	▲	TRACK AND FIELD
8.	NEW	NHL '97
9.	RE	SIM CITY 2000
10.	▼	BUST-A-MOVE 2

Perhaps the game of the year sits in its rightful place in the chart! Congrats Core!

Sony's big three finally hit the shelves, and you lot go absolutely mental for them! **Tomb Raider**, **Soviet Strike**, and **Crash Bandicoot** prove that people actually know a good game when they see one! **Soviet** actually held the top spot for three weeks after its launch, but Lara Croft and Co came storming in at the last minute to nick the top spot. **Mr. Bandicoot** has held firm in the top three, keeping out the Psygnosis big racers, **F1** and **Wipeout 2097**. Making a special appearance, for one week only, was **Burning Road** before it disappeared probably off the edge of a cliff! **Actua Golf** dropped alarmingly since the last time you visited our little chart page, dropping right off the scale in only two weeks. However, expect **Fifa '97** and **Die Hard Trilogy** to feature heavily next month, and maybe a few surprise releases, like **Iron and Blood** perhaps?

MEAN MACHINES PLAYSTATION RECOMMENDS





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HOT PROPERTIES

One of the reasons we love the PlayStation so much is 'cos there's so much damn stuff on the go! Time to look again at the new releases! "HOT PLOPERDEEEES!!"

PERFECT ASSASSIN

Grolier Interactive

It always amazes me just how crap some games' storylines are. I mean, everyone's allowed to spew crap at some point or other, but whoever was behind the press release for this forthcoming release really wants their head examined. I've really no idea what the hell it's on about, but looking at the shots, I'd have to say we're in for some Resident Evil-style action mixed with Time Commando strategy. Cool, non?

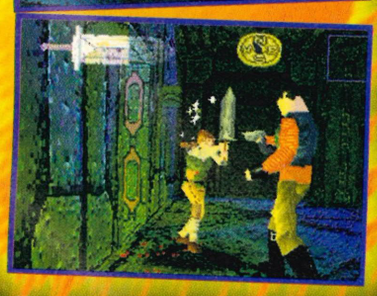
RELEASE
May '97

EXCALIBUR 2555AD

Telstar

Egads and gadzooks my liege! The mighty legend that is Excalibur has been stolen! The mighty sword now resides in someone's back passage (or something) and it's down to you to get it back out. You take on the role of Merlin's humble apprentice, armed only with a trusty broadsword, some spell-casting abilities, and a rather tasty 3D engine to boot! It's action, it's adventure, it's sausages. Well that last one was a lie, but you get the picture. More next year!

RELEASE
MARCH '97

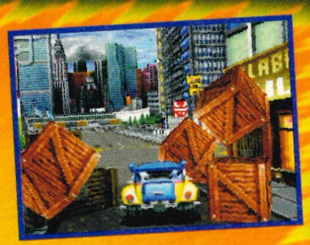


WRECKIN' CREW

Telstar

You won't believe this, but Wreckin' Crew is a "blisteringly fast" racing game — with the emphasis on fun and enjoyment. I know! Crazy or what! Selecting from all manner of motor (from a 1957 Chevrolet to a beaten-up Ford) each with their own strengths and weaknesses, you get to then burn round the track in a "blisteringly fast" fashion. There are stunt tracks, hidden bonus levels, cup competitions and head-to-head modes — not to mention a sixteen-player demolition derby! "blisteringly fast!"

RELEASE
March '97

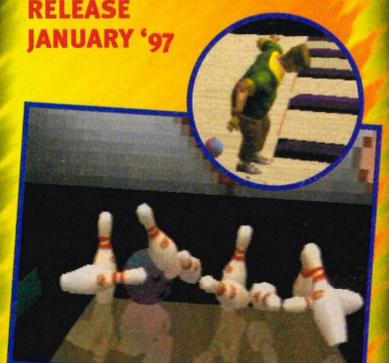


TEN PIN ALLEY

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Wouldn't you agree that for all the incredible games we've had on the PlayStation, you'll never be happy until someone produces a really top ten pin bowling game? Well worry no longer, as those groovy funksters at EA have just the thing with their latest offering, Ten Pin Alley. As you might imagine, this will recreate all the thrills and spills of, er... rolling balls along the floor and hitting, er... wooden pins over. Bok. Perhaps. Anyway, it's good to see someone trying something that hasn't been done before. At least, that's what I think.

RELEASE
JANUARY '97



AYRTON SENNA'S KART DUEL

Philips Media

Never mind your stunning futuristic sports (WipEout), never mind your incredibly accurate simulations (F1) and never mind your fairly crap Micro Machines copies (Supersonic racers). Fun! That's what we're after here, and what better way to indulge than a bit of kart racing? Yes, it's all low to the floor, takes place at a "blisteringly fast" pace (have we already used that?) And done in a rub-a-dub two-player link-up style-e. There are tons of tracks, tons of karts, and tons of accidents to be had. And there's a sick Senna link in there as well. Something there for all the family, then!

RELEASE
DECEMBER '96

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BRINGS OUT THE YOB IN YOU

Revolutionary 8 player simultaneous split screen action for Playstation & Saturn (with multi-taps)
4 players for PC CD Rom*
Up to 27 stunning 3D tracks and backgrounds
Superb gameplay options including micro mode, rumble mode and full multiple angle playbacks
Intelligent CPU cars that adapt to your ability
4 levels of difficulty vary from easy to crazy - ideal for both learners and masters
Loaded with hidden options and secret tracks
The essential racing and fighting kart game

100% PURE GAMEPLAY

*Mega Drive 4 players only. Game Boy 1 player only.

STREET RACER

SO MAD, IT'LL DRIVE YOU ROUND THE BEND.

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MEAN TEAM BURNING ROAD

GOODNESS GRACIOUS GREAT WHEELS OF FIRE!

Just in case you don't get that Maclaren F1 that you're asking Santa for this Christmas, we've teamed up with our buddies at Funsoft to bring you a racey comp that'll push you into top gear!

It's fast, it's furious... Yes it's BURNING ROAD! and have we got some goodies in store for you in our Xmas Prize Draw?

Burning Road's an adrenaline-pumpin' arcade racer where you pit your wits against seven computer opponents or go head-to-head in a two-player link-up. A gear-crunchin' mix of race styles, Burning Road combines straights, jumps, dodgy weather and twisting courses – which all makes for a total white-knuckle ride.

WIN! WIN! WIN! BURNING ROAD GOODIES!

THE PRIZES

Pole Position
Two lucky winners will each receive a copy of Burning Road, a hip and trendy Burning Road record bag and a BR jacket (that's Burning Road not British Rail!).

2nd Prize
Three copies of Burning Road plus a BR record bag!

Runners-Up
7 runners-up will each receive a copy of the game!

Skidmarks
And for the Robin Reliants who didn't make it off the grid we've got three pairs of Burning Road undies (complete with skids) to give away!

HOW TO ENTER

If you're already a member of the Mean Team you will automatically be entered into the prize draw which will take place on Friday 31st January 1996.

However, even if you are not currently an MT member you can enter this fab draw. Simply subscribe to Mean Machines PlayStation for at least six months and not only will you be entered in to the Prize Draw BUT you will also automatically become a Mean Team member - which entitles you to a hot monthly newsletter from the Editor as well as the chance to win loads of goodies.
Just fill in the form or call our subscriptions hotline on 01858 435350.

All winners will be notified within 28 days of the prize draw.

To subscribe to Mean Machines PlayStation complete the form and send with payment to:

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All subscriptions will be processed as quickly as possible, but you should allow 28 days for the order to be processed and expect to receive the first available issue after that.

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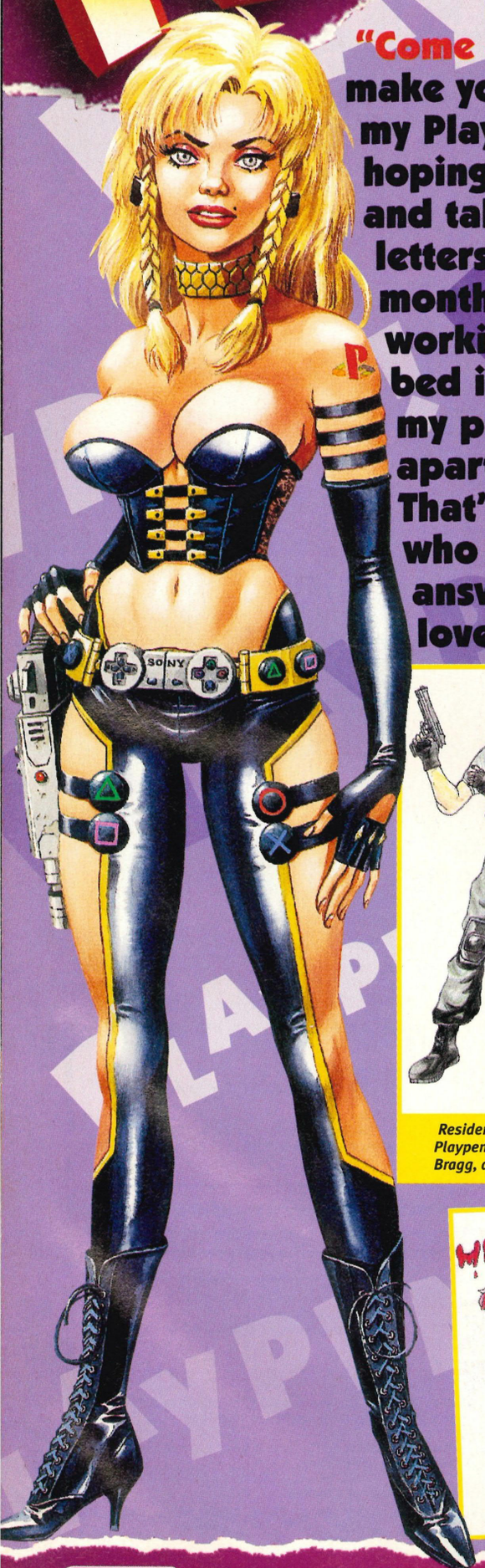
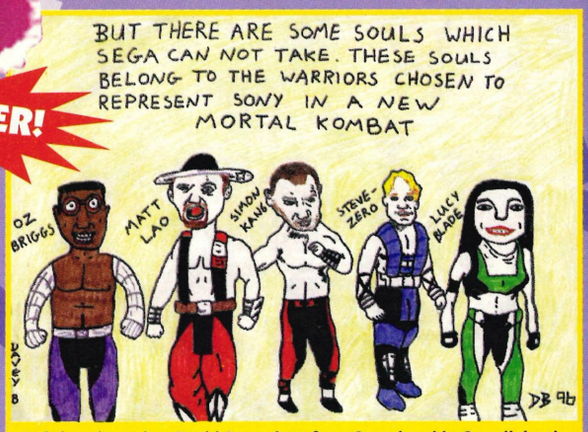
PLAYPEN!



"Come on in and make yourselves at home in my Playpen readers! I'm hoping Si doesn't come in and take over all the letters as he did last month, otherwise he'll be working from a hospital bed instead of my plush apartment. That'll show him who should be answering your lovely letters."

WINNER!

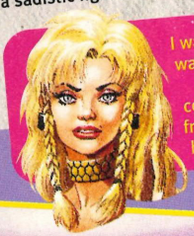


And the winner is... David Brownless from Gateshead in Geordieland with his fantastic drawing of the Mean Machine MK Team. We particularly liked Oz Browne's pop-out eyes and Lucy's rubbery double chin - the similarities are remarkable!!

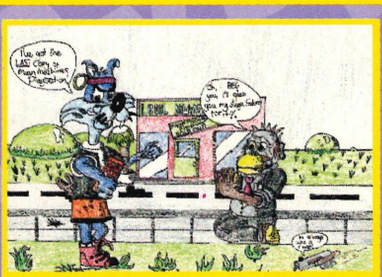
PAMELA ANDERSON CHANGES NAME!!!

Dear Playpen,
I love the letters people have been sending in and the pictures, but I think the letter I've got is the best. Well here it is. One of your reviews on page 27 of edition one, left me wondering. Why has Pamela Anderson left the film business, changed her name to Mary-Ivonskaya and turned to the computer beat-'em-up biz? I bet Tommy Lee is a nervous wreck having a sadistic fighter for a wife!

Ian Evans,
Lancaster,
Lancashire.



I want to answer this strange letter. Obviously this was written before Ms. Lee and big Tommy split up, so it would appear that Ian Evans is indeed correct. Pamela Anderson is indeed Mary from Tobal No.1. Remember readers, you read it here first in MMP!

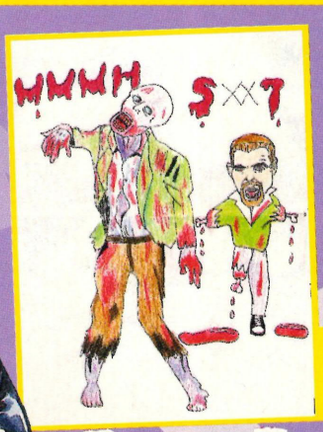


Thankyou very much for this great picture of Firo & Klawd Steve Pool of Northbolt. Anymore pics of this quality and you could find yourself receiving the free game!

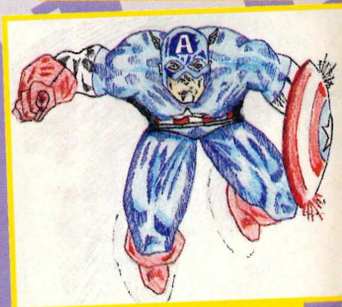
Resident Evil returns to the pages of Playpen. This time from the pen of Daniel Bragg, aged 15, from Herne Bay in Kent.

Another excellent drawing of the bald Zombie from Resident Evil. By William Jenkins, aged 16, from Combe Martin in North Devon. Top pic mate, but wer'e all wondering who you modelled it on, yer dad?

Syndicate Wars as featured in this issue by Danny Sangra from Moortown in Leeds.



More Res Evil, but what we wanna know is what has the zombie done to poor Matthew? Only Robert Meehan, aged 13, of County Limerick knows! What ever it is it's left him practically limbless.

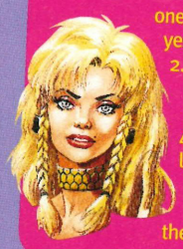


Captain America's in yer face courtesy of Adrian Rebello from Thorton Heath in Surrey.

X-CELLENT MAG ETC.

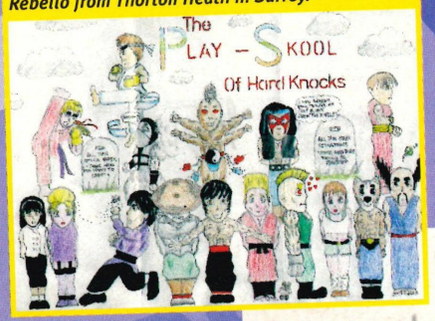
Dear Joy and Si,
Firstly I want to tell you that I think your mag is brill and I have a subscription. Anyway, I have written to you to ask some questions and would be grateful if you could answer them:
1. Have you any plans to give away a tips book with future issues?
2. Are there any plans for Monkey Island to come onto the PlayStation, if so when?
3. Do you know of any cheats for Resident Evil?
4. What style of game is the new X-Files games and will you be doing a review or preview in the near future?
5. Do you feel that there should be more point-n-click style games on the PlayStation like Broken Sword?

Craig Ridley,
Loughton,
Essex.



Well Craig, you're lucky enough to have me answering, as I know more than Mr. Clays anyway!
1. We give one away every month! If you mean a bigger one containing tips for all the PlayStation games so far, then yes, I'm trying to persuade Lord EMAP to do one.
2. Sorry, I've had my ear to the ground, but nobody seems to be working on it at the moment.
3. None have been released yet.
4. It's a first person perspective, point-n-click game which leads nicely on to...
5. Yes there should be more, but don't expect X-Files for a while, if at all. It's still being developed on PC at the moment.

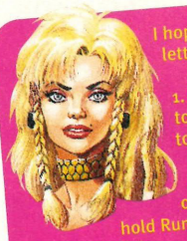
'The Play-Skool of Hardknockers' or is that Tekken 2 Kids. Who cares 'cos it's top. Thanks Mr. Adrian Rebello from Thorton Heath in Surrey.



KOMPLETE KOMBAT NUTTER!

Dear Joy,
Please could you answer my questions.
1. How do you give Mercy in Mortal Kombat 3?
2. Do you know any cheats on MK Trilogy?
3. When will the arcade Tekken 3 be released?

Kevin McGonigle,
Pollok,
Glasgow.



I hope you're reading this Si, letters to me and not to you. Just as it should be!
1. Firstly, both fighters need to win a round, and you need to be victorious in the third. Then, at the 'Finish Him/Her' message, walk over half a screen away. Then hold Run and press Down three times, et voila!
2. D'oh! We printed some last month.
3. Blimey, you're a bit keen aren't you. It's out on test in Japan about now, and it may have reached some good arcades over here by now. If not, some test versions should make it here by Crimbo.

I WANT TO BE YOU JOY!

Dear Si and Joy

I've been a big fan of Mean Machines since issue zero in 1990 and I still think it's the best magazine on the rack. You see, I've always loved computers ever since I bought the ancient Commodore 16 ten years ago. I still have a lot of games for it now! What I would like to be in the future is a raving reviewer for a computer mag so I was hoping you could answer these easy questions please:

1. How did you both become a part of this mag?
2. How and what would I need to do to be a games reviewer, ie what qualifications?
Thank you very much.

Steven Brown,
Govan,
Glasgow.

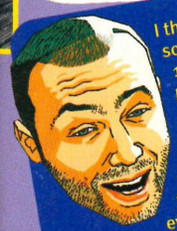
Because I am the actual hack here, and not some lucky relative of Lord EMAP, I think I should answer these.
Joy: Hold on, he asked how both of us got into the biz, so I'm going first. Originally I wanted to be a tattoo artist, then a hippie, then a window cleaner, but then I discovered I was a relative of Lord EMAP, and he got me this job, where all I do is play games, answer all of your letters and wear very little. Cool eh?
Si: Yeah it's all right for some. I had to work my way here. First I worked down the pits with me ma and pa, where people always made fun of me because I played games all the time. Then I accidentally hit the big cheese of EMAP with my car and he made me his slave, which is where I am this very day! As for your second question, you need to be very good at English. GSCE's are a must, and maybe a degree or A-Levels. You also need to be enthusiastic and know a lot about games. But, most important of all are your tea making skills, your ability to walk to the toast shop every morning and it also helps if you're a good egg and not a total nib-end! You could try getting a work experience placement first, as that tends to help a bit!

JUST A FEW QUESTIONS.

Dear Joy and Si,

Firstly I would like to congratulate you on your excellent magazine. Secondly I have a few questions which I hope you can answer for me.
1. I subscribed to your magazine, and I've received Zero Divide. It is a great game, but I have got problems with it. The game runs smoothly, but the music is always skipping and on some stages there is no sound at all except for the sound effects. There is no problem with my PlayStation because all of my other games work okay. I was wondering if you have any explanations?
2. When is Time Crisis and Soul Edge coming out?
3. Are Namco planning to bring out Point Blank for the PlayStation?
4. Is it true that X-Men has been scrapped?
5. Is it true that the PlayStations that came out after Christmas cannot run Japanese games?
6. When is Datel bringing out the Japanese converter?
7. Finally, why do Japanese games take so long to come out in Britain? For example I played on Tekken 2 last Easter in Hong Kong and it has only just come out over here!

P. Wong,
NorthField,
Birmingham.



I think this is more my department than Joy's, so here we go:
1. If none of the other games are giving you problems, then it sounds like a fault on the disc. Otherwise, the actual laser reading the CD inside your PlayStation may be the problem. But I doubt that very much!
2. Do we come up with the goods or what! Check this month's awesome cover story to find out everything you want to know about Time Crisis, and as for Soul Edge, it's out in Japan right about now!
3. No news as yet, but I'm sure they're considering it.
4. One week it is, the next it isn't, so I don't know what to think any more! Seriously though, it's looking doubtful.
5. Well, if you have an English machine, you can't run Japanese games anyway, unless you know how to do the dodgy 'pen trick' which is what I assume you're referring to here. In that case, no they can't run the games.
6. They were looking into one, but it's been put on hold for the foreseeable future.
7. Erm, the post service in Japan is more reliable? All of the flights bringing the games over were delayed? The truth is, it's the way it has always been and probably will be! Sorry!

Here's Crash Bandicoot doin' the do. God only knows what level he's jumping and spinning around. Perhaps the best bet is to refer to our top player's guide and check which level he's on. Still, it doesn't stop him being an odd-shaped little Bandicoot. Check that dodgy Gladstone Small neck. Cheers to Mark Greening from Gloucester.

PHOTO MISFITS!!

Fancy winning a fiver off Simon? Well, all you gotta do is send in photos of you dressed up as a games character or your fave movie stars as they appear in your fave movies. Also, if you've got a celebrity look-a-likey mum, dad, sister or neighbour send them in and tell us who they're supposed to look like. We'll print the best and then force Si to send you five of his Earth pounds.

OI SIMON! GIVE ME FIVE POUNDS!, Joy's Pad, Mean Machines PlayStation, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London. EC1R 3AU.

PLAY-DOUGH

Virgin INTERACTIVE entertainment

Win more games, games and games with Virgin. For the best letter or picture we receive each month, we'll send them a brand spanking new Virgin game for their troubles. Are we cool or what. Anyway, now send your bits and bobs to:

MMPLAY ARE THE BEST, NOW GIVE ME A GAME!
Joy's Penthouse Suite, Mean Machines PlayStation, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU

REMEMBER: Please write down which game you'd like to win, because it saves you the hassle of phoning up and it gives us the time to get the game in. Also give us a bit of time to sort the prizes. We know you want them as quick as possible, but that isn't always practical straight away. Ta!

That's enough from us this month readers! Enjoy your New Year and Joy and I will see you in '97 with a whole new batch of your excellent artwork and letters. Take it easy and remember to keep giving those games a proper hammering! Bye.

SPECIAL

Oh yes! The next nail in the Saturn's coffin arrives in the form of Namco's superb coin-op, Time Crisis. And we've seen it on PlayStation! Does life actually get any better than this? I think not me old matey!

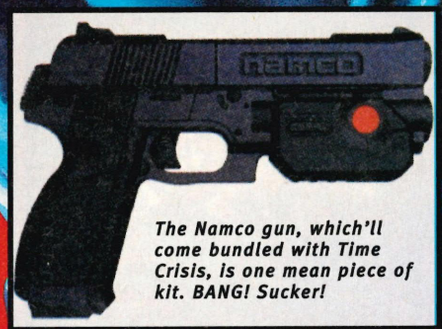
You can run, but you just can't hide. Eat lead muvver-plucker

Johnny Saturn owner comes in from school and loads up Virtua Cop. "They may have matched Virtua Fighter and Sega Rally," he thinks to himself, "but they'll never beat my Cop!" Then a bell sounds. A giant hooded man he recognises from Bill and Ted, known as the Grim Reaper, appears and floats over to his big, black, chunky box of not many tricks. Then, in one fowl swoop he slices it into pieces and hands him a copy of Mean Machines PlayStation. At which point Johnny plops his pants and goes and buries his Jupiter or whatever it's called in the backyard and rushes out to get Sony's marvel machine. Why? Because he's just seen our exclusive on Time Crisis, and he knows that anything black is dead, and grey is now most definitely in. If you have any mates who own a Saturn, show 'em this and say they can shove Fighters Megamix and Cop 2 up their nether regions, because nothing is gonna stop Sony now. Bwa-ha-ha!

TIME CRISIS

WATCH OUT FOR THE DUCKS!

What's the difference between this and Cop? That's really what you all want to know. Well the basics remain the same, you point your gun at the screen and blast everything in site. So far so good. But the most novel bit is the way you reload. Shooting outside the screen is old hat now, because Namco have introduced the foot pedal. Once the game starts, you step on the pedal to move into the screen and begin shooting. Release the pedal to duck behind an object where you can't get hit, and you'll also reload while your foot is on the lever. Obviously they couldn't make this for the PlayStation, so the Namco gun comes with a button on the side which acts in exactly the same way. Awesome!



The Namco gun, which'll come bundled with Time Crisis, is one mean piece of kit. BANG! Sucker!

BOSS IN BOOTS!

After you've completed all of the three areas of each stage, you move onto the Boss stages. Each starts with a little sequence in which everyone stands about going "How dare you try to fool my plans," and then the fighting starts. Be prepared for a hard time!

CLAW MAN

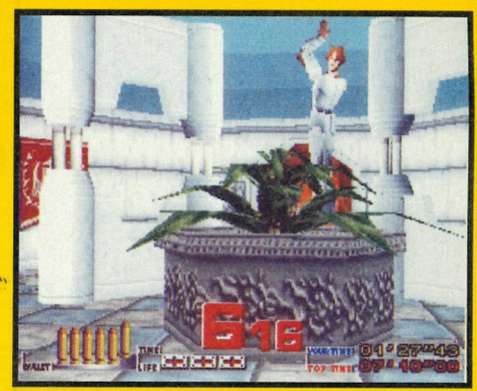
Sorry, there wasn't a proper name for this bloke, so we've decided to call him Claw Man. He looks similar to Vega from SF2, and behaves much in the same way. Lots of jumping and quick movements combine to make him a tough opponent.

SHERUDO GARO

The man who kidnapped Rachel. He's the last blood relative of the Royal Family and wants to use her to overthrow the government of Sercia, where the game's set. You don't get much time to react to the knives he throws, so be on your toes or you'll end up skewered!

WILD DOG

All that stands between you, Rachel and that smoochy candle-lit dinner! He is the leader of an organised crime syndicate, also known as the 'Wild Dogs' and one tough guy! He uses pistols against you firstly, and whips out the machine guns when he gets down to his last legs!



These screenshots show exactly how close the PlayStation version...

...mirrors that of its arcade older brother. Brilliant isn't it!

Your completely surrounded! Only one thing for it – utter carnage!

MIRROR MIRROR ON THE WALL!

Graphical touches are abundant in Time Crisis, and one of the best is the mirror section during the second stage. Richard turns the corner and walks towards the mirror, at which point you see an enemy walk around the corner and attempt to shoot him – and all this in the mirror! Trust us on this, it's pretty awesome.

SPECIAL

FORK IN THE ROAD?

At the end of the first area of Level One, you come across a group of baddies who are using a fork lift truck for protection. Normally, you'd have to take things a little carefully with so many of them on-screen at once. But if you aim all of your ammo at the crate resting on the forks, it'll blow up, causing the fork lift to explode, killing everyone else in the process! This time saving tip was brought to you by Mean Machines PlayStation!

POLE AXED!

In a similar vein to the fork lift on the first stage, the second also has a helpful clear-the-area-of-all-baddies secret. Play through until you reach the section with a group of metal girders held in in place on the left side of the screen, and shoot the strip holding them there. Lo and behold, they all come tumbling down, destroying all the enemies in the area. Watch out though, as you have to duck away from the last one, otherwise you get squashed in a pancake style-e!

"Alright you guys, there's four of you and one of me. You gonna give in?"

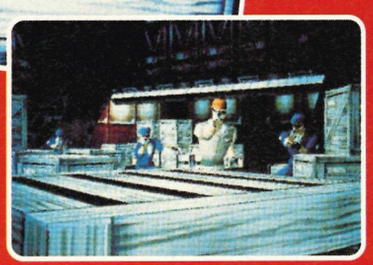
THERE REALLY IS A TIME CRISIS!

It isn't called Time Crisis for nothing! The time limit is just as much of a hindrance on your progress as the enemies are, so keep an eye out for it. Every time you move forward during a level your time increases by a few seconds. But there are additional bonuses if you're a bit of a dead shot. For instance, shooting people who are still running around in the background will result in four or five seconds added on to your clock. Time to start practising then!

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE!

These shots come directly from the coin-op version...

...Take a look and then compare them to the 40% complete PlayStation shots.



It's difficult to spot the difference isn't it. Which is brill news for us!

NOW AVAILABLE FOR PLAYSTATION AND SATURN!

Sega Saturn Magazine - "Sheer Brilliance." 95%

Mean Machines PlayStation - "The best of its kind just got better." 95%

EDGE - "Capcom have come up with the goods once more... it's hard to see just what else they could do to make a better 2D fighting game."

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PlayStation

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CAPCOM

SPECIAL

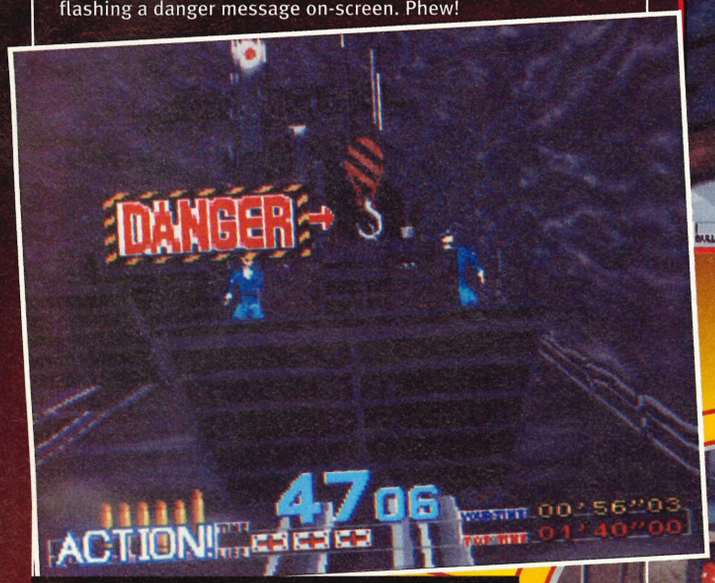
TIME TO START RUNNING!

There are two ways to play Time Crisis. One is the Story Mode, where you play the game through continually, until run out of lives or credits. The other is the timed game. You cannot die from being hit which is a good thing, but you have to complete each area within a certain time limit. Make it, and you move on to the next section but fail and it's game over. As you're playing, your current rank is displayed in the top-right of the screen and updated every time you move on, so you can compare yourself to the other players before you.

Meet our hero resplendent in his cool leather jacket and quiffy hair-do. What do you reckon Cliff Richard or one of them Levi blokes?

WARNING: DANGER IMMINENT!

It's not just the Mad Dogs who are after you... even the cranes and crates have you in their sights! So, what am I talking about? Well, at stages during the game, the backgrounds become a part of the action, with hooks swinging down towards you that need ducking. Sometimes you can be shooting the human baddies, not notice a huge box come hurtling at you and cop one in the face. So be warned. However, the game will warn you of upcoming hazards by flashing a danger message on-screen. Phew!

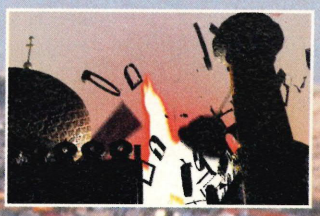


Everytime you think you've got it sorted out another half-dozen of the swine turn up and spoil your afternoon. At this rate you'll never save the girly!

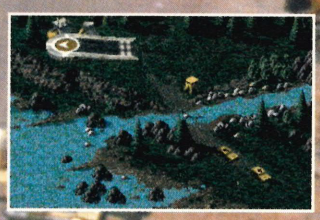
AHHHH THE PAIN!

You start the game with three lives, represented by the medical boxes at the bottom of the screen. When you take a major hit – you'll know because a huge great bullet hole appears on-screen! – you lose one of these lives straight away. However, it is possible to get hit by a single bullet and only lose small chunks of life, but, be warned, it does weaken you for later hits. Our advice then is simple... er, don't get hit!

During various stages of Time Crisis you have to shoot helicopters out of the sky! Plus, at the same time deal with blokes like this that continue to shoot hot lead at you with their rather large guns! Double gulp!



...THERE WILL BE NO FOURTH WORLD WAR...



COMMAND & CONQUER

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...THE GAME THAT TAKES NO PRISONERS...

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SPECIAL

Your prayers are answered! As you read this issue Namco's latest incarnation of the Ridge Racer game engine is revving off the shelves in Japan. While we can't have it yet, let's journey through the thrills and spills that are Rage Racer!

RAGE RACER

When Ridge Racer first hit the shelves of the UK it knocked us completely out of our metaphorical synchro mesh socks. What, a console game that could deliver that kind of graphical quality accompanied with arcade speed? Unbelievable we thought! Time passed and before we'd got over the shock, Namco delivered Ridge Racer Revolution for us to drool over. The update had been improved, the variation in track had been enhanced and Namco even managed to pull off a link-up option! What next we thought. Is this the end of the revolution? Of course not because rage Race is upon us. And this time, because of new rules that govern the way games MUST now be optimised for the European market, there's no ugly borders or loss of speed. Yes my friends, the ultimate racer here...

A TRIP TO HALFORDS IS IN ORDER...

So you've invested in your motor, now what you going to do with it? Well, one of the first options that'll greet you in Rage Racer is the Editor. Having purchased one of the ten cars on offer, you can now pick what kind of spray job you'd like on it, what speed stripes you'd like it to sport and even your team sponsor! Next on the agenda – if you've got the loot – is to upgrade the engine and tyres of your hot rod in the Tune Up department.

CAR TROUBLE

Worried about which cars you can take out onto the tracks included in Rage Racer? Well, fear not 'cos here's your complete guide around the car lot of Rage Racer...

ESPERANZA

ACCELERATION
MAXIMUM SPEED
HANDLING

ALOUETTE

ACCELERATION
MAXIMUM SPEED
HANDLING

ABEILLE

ACCELERATION
MAXIMUM SPEED
HANDLING

PEGASE

ACCELERATION
MAXIMUM SPEED
HANDLING

INSTINET

ACCELERATION
MAXIMUM SPEED
HANDLING

BY: NAMCO OUT: ON IMPORT PRICE: TBC

OH NO! THEY'RE EVEN CLEVERER THIS TIME!

Yep, the intelligence of the CPU cars has been radically overhauled, making the SOBs a real pain to overtake. Ah well, take heart in the fact that the track design has been completely redesigned giving you longer straights to overtake the new 'brainy' cars.

OF COURSE!

Rage Racer boasts four completely new tracks for you to rev your engines around. The tracks, Mythical Coast, Over Pass City, Lakeside Gate and The Extreme Oval take you around various cities of the world. So, don't be surprised when you steam past familiar European cityscapes or drive straight through monuments like the Arc de Triumphe! Rock!

"Stormy weather ahead. Maybe it's time to slip change those tyres from slicks to wets."

"By the 'tache on Mario the mechanic's mouth! It's the gun from Time Crisis! Wow!

Oh, oh and oh again! Here comes Sonic the Squirrel in his Porsche type motor!

HIRE CAR? NO LOWER CAR!

For Rage Racer Namco have altered the height at which you view your motor when you race in the external view. In previous encounters the view was set higher giving you more bonnet to look at. Having had a rethink, Namco have decided to set the view much lower so the driver gets a greater feeling of speed because you're near the tarmac. Add this to the fact that the RR engine is about a 20% faster than any other PlayStation Ridge game and you have a much greater sensation of speed. Remember, speed deceives!

BAYONET	HI-JACK	FATALITA	ISTANET	CHEPARDO
ACCELERATION	ACCELERATION	ACCELERATION	ACCELERATION	ACCELERATION
MAXIMUM SPEED	MAXIMUM SPEED	MAXIMUM SPEED	MAXIMUM SPEED	MAXIMUM SPEED
HANDLING	HANDLING	HANDLING	HANDLING	HANDLING

REVIEWS!

NEW YEAR'S HEAVE!

Is '97 upon us so soon? One moment you're concentrating hard on a 'Station game, the next it's a new year. And what a year it promises to be for you wise folk who chose the PlayStation as your gaming machine and MMP as your gaming bible! You'll already have seen our **EXCLUSIVE PLAYSTATION** preview of Namco's brilliant coin-op cop killer, Time Crisis. Awesome isn't it! But that's just the tip of a shiny CD, 'cos there's just so much excellent stuff about to emerge for Sony's Saturn killer it's untrue. Soul Edge and Rage Racer are just two to tantalise you without even thinking. IT IS going to be the year of the PlayStation and we pledge to bring you the very best coverage of the games that matter to you in the coming months, in the best possible way we can. Cease with the trembling and enjoy what promises to be an AWESOME time for us. See you chums!

REVIEWS

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A LOOK IN THE CRYSTAL BALL...

What will the New Year bring for you. Here Mean-styc Meg takes a glance into the future and tells you those all-important score guides...

90-100% What a year! Meg sees top girly dates with the Spice Girls, Dannii Minogue, Cameron Diaz and Caprice. Fill yer boots!

80-89% Through the glare of the ball Meg sees you winning a top games compo and loads of new PlayStation titles!

70-79% Wow! A foreign holiday in the blazing sunshine and Meg sees a romantic encounter with a dusky jewel.

60-69% A decent year with not too many highlights, but our oracle sees good results at school. Okay, not brilliant, but it's better than a kick in the nads.

50-59% Hmm, not exactly super, but at least nothing crap happens and you're not gonna end up under a milk float!

31-49% A poor year that sees you travelling to Doncaster for a two week break. It rains solid and, out of desperation, you end up with a right moose!

11-30% Meg sees disaster in the Summer. Your baby brother drops a slushy dump on the CD drive of your beloved PSX.

0-10% Oh dear! Is it really worth getting out of bed this year. No girls, no fun, no life and worse, NO PLAYSTATION!

PICTURE THIS!

Here, for your deliberation, are those all-important icons that immediately tell you what peripherals and add-ons each and every game supports, without all that meaningless clutter and bottucks!

OUT WITH THE OLD IN WITH THE NEW!

It's a brand new year and that means time to reflect on the previous 12 months, make those all-important resolutions for the coming year and go out and drink loads and loads of er, Diet Pepsi. Here's what we all resolved to do...

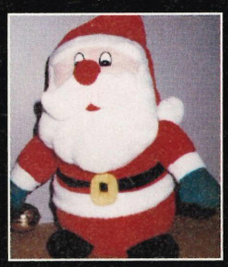
SIMON "WARM ROOM COLD DRINK!" CLAYS

Simon just wanted the cold to go away! "I hate these Winter months," he moaned to all and sundry. "I'd rather stay by a warm fire surrounded by warm, shapely bodies and cold lager!" he admitted through glazed, dreamy eyes. Unfortunately, fate has a cruel way of showing its hand, and Si ended up around a fire, surrounded by tramps holding a can of Tennents Super. Bah! Humbug!

WINTER WARMING GAMES
Command & Conquer, Time Crisis and NBA In The Zone 2.

BRETT "PHILLIP OR IS IT PHILIPS" MOUNTAGNE

Matt's resolution was to be a good Santa, 'cos last month he was the archetypal 'crap santa'. He wished and wished and wished, and then one morning he woke up and he was Papa Crimbo. Without further ado, he packed his bag and left for Lapland, never to be seen again. Rumour has it he's now sliding around the Pole in a big black motor with a carphone, trying to inflict crap game son the public! Fare thee well Matthew!



GAMES FOR PR
Command & Conquer, Iron & Blood and Time Crisis perchance?

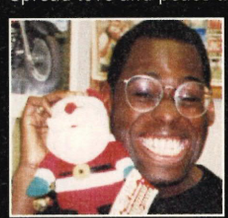
STEVE "GUN LAW" KEY

It's a sensitive topic at the mo, but our Steve's got a serious problem with Time Crisis. His New Year's resolution is to right wrongs and generally be some mysterious avenger that saves folk in the nick of time. Trouble is he lives in a danger hotspot – or so The Sun says – and now he's too busy zipping up his leather mask and stirrups to do any work for the mag. Er, hi-ho Silver away young man!

Games for a shooting gallery
Time Crisis, NBA Jam Extreme and NBA In The Zone 2.

OZWOLD "HOME ALONE" BROWNE

Lovable Oz loves the whole festive season and wanted to spread love and peace the world over. But this year his dream was to move into his own home. And it happened! But, things went sadly wrong because his mum and dad forgot he'd moved and left him 'Home Alone' over the whole period.



Games to be alone with
Iron & Blood, Hardcore 4X4 and Time Crisis.

LUCY "PUSSY GALORE" HILL

It's been a tough year for luscious Lucy. First she just wished she was asleep, then she wished she was on hot desert island, and then she saw a cat, and everything fell into place. Cat's do sod all but eat, sleep, and bask in the sun. Even when it's cold they've got that lovely warm fur. Without any hesitation she morphed into a feline and has been purring ever since. Problem is that paws ain't cut out for design work!

Whiskers Supagames:
Time Crisis, NBA Jam and Iron & Blood.

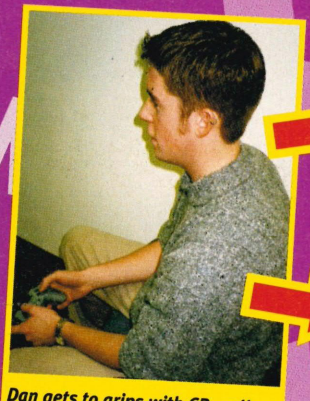
U-REVIEW

Flibber me gibbets, it's the New Year already and time for another of our lucky readers to enjoy the luxury of a day out at the PlayStation offices and the chance to review unseen games. Rock...

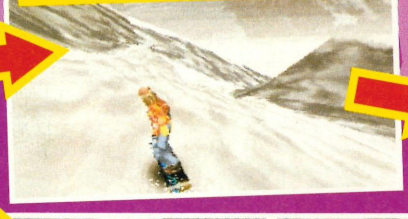
11.00 AM: *It's a cold Winter's morn and our Matt greets young Danny Sanderson in the MMP limo!*

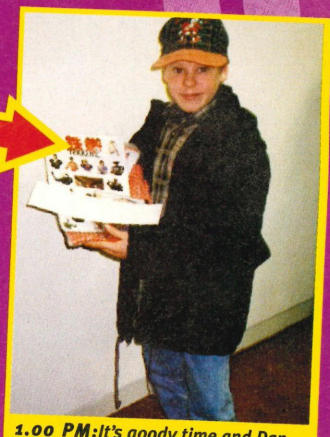
11.35 AM: *We're well on our way to Sony's plush offices, so 11 year old Dan decides to enjoy a Coca-cola in the back of the 'Station wagon!*

12.00 AM: *We arrive, meet Guy "Frosty the Snowman" Pearce and get down to some heavy duty Cool Boarders action.*



Dan gets to grips with CB, pulls off a few tricks and leaves poor Guy lieing face down in the icy white stuff. D'oh!



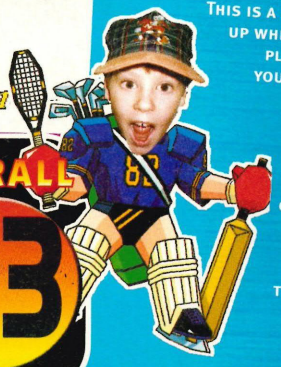


1.00 PM: *It's goody time and Dan doesn't mind collecting his Tekken 2 stickers, a Crash T-shirt, a copy of Motor Toon GP2 and Crash Bandicoot, and a posh car sticker!*

2.00 PM: *Well, they say skiing makes you hungry, so we climb aboard the limo and head for some Planet Hollywood grub and a large sliced of apres piste!*

3.30 PM: *Before heading off home, Dan shakes hands with the stars!*

DANNY COMMENT



THIS IS A HARD GAME TO PICK UP WHEN YOU FIRST START PLAYING IT, BUT ONCE YOU'RE COOL WITH THE CONTROLS IT'S BRILLIANT. THE IMMEDIATE FUN COMES FROM NEGOTIATING THE COURSES, BUT THE LONG-TERM FUN COMES FROM PULLING OFF THE TRICKS. HONESTLY, CB IS THE RIDGE RACER OF THE SNOW WORLD.

90 SOUNDS	94 ANIMATION
99 GRAPHICS	90 PLAYABILITY

OVERALL **93**

IT COULD BE YOU-HOO!

Right! Are you suitably green with envy and just dying to become the next Mean Machines PlayStation reader to take the trip of a gaming lifetime? Well, all you have to do is answer the tie-breaker (in no more words than 15 words), fill in the coupon below and post it to the following address:

I HAVE TO REVIEW WITH U! U-Review, Mean Machines PlayStation, Emap Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London. EC1R 3AU.

NAME: .....

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CONTACT TEL. NO. .....

TIE-BREAKER: The power of the PlayStation is awesome because:

.....

.....

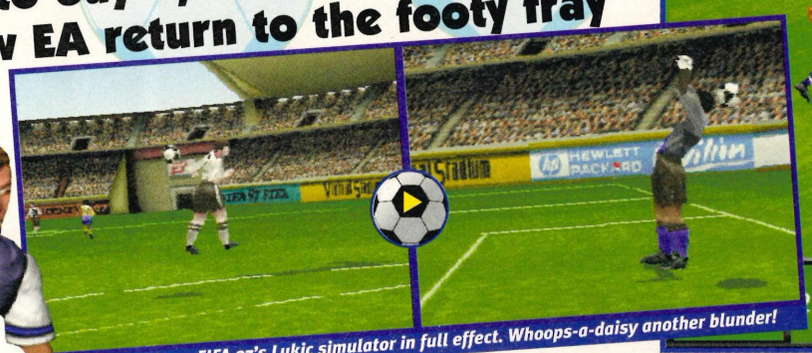
Now all you have to do is wait by the phone because our Simon will be calling ONE lucky reader very shortly!

REVIEW

FIFA 97

Thankfully, these aren't clips from the Gareth Southgate- Take Penalties My Way book, otherwise they'd all have gone wide. Boom boom!

The first FIFA was – let's face facts – pants! But because you lot acted like zombies and slithered out in your thousands to buy it, it stormed up the old 'Station chart! Now EA return to the footy fray with their '97 version!

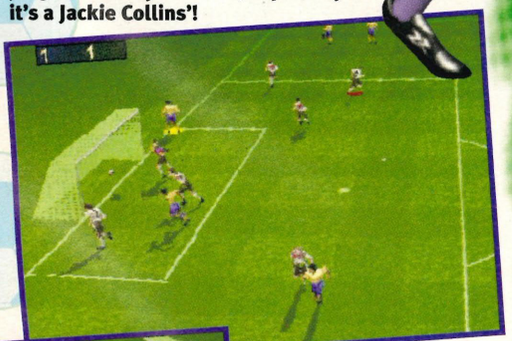


Here we see FIFA 97's Lukic simulator in full effect. Whoops-a-daisy another blunder!

Seven-one. Now there's a score line you don't see everyday. And, for the benefit of all our readers in Southampton, here it is again. SEVEN-ONE!! Not wanting to offend them all, try six-two an' all. Yes, Man Utd fall the way of the magic at the Dell and crumbled SIX-TWO. As one booze-thirsty balding football pundit said, "It's a funny old game." Which brings us nicely on to FIFA '97, perhaps one of EA's most anticipated follow-ups — because it's indeed a "Funny old game." Loads of new motion-capture things, some flash camera work, animations galore and all the fancy stuff that you've come to expect have been thrown in by EA to make this game, hopefully for them, perfection. But remember; never judge a book by its cover, especially if it's a Jackie Collins'!

FAR TOO COLD FOR THAT!

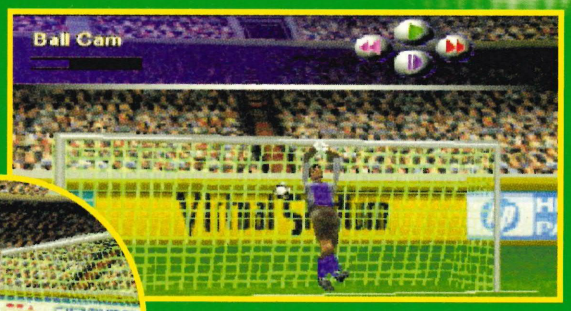
As most fair-weathered footballers will tell you, there's nothing better than sliding tackles in the wet. Skidding twenty yards, only to miss the ball completely and take out the old bloke on the touchline is great fun. But for the comfort of all our "I've conveniently gone and injured myself, and it's got nothing to do with the fact that it's wet," readers, the Indoor option may appeal to you. Played in a completely sealed off pitch with the ball never leaving play, it's a faster, more skilled version of the real thing. And there's loads of goals too!

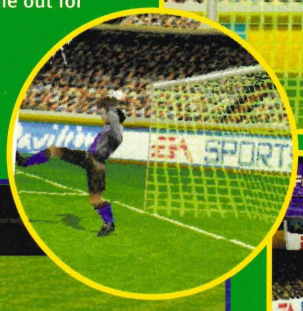


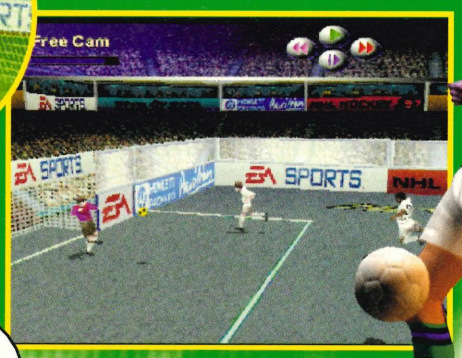
"Help! Me Turbo-Pantex 35,000 mm super-power zoom see Mars from here camera's blown up!"

WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING AT?

A quick mention must go out to the goalkeepers in this game, who for some reason unbeknown to us, have all suddenly become the biggest piles of plop ever! They don't come out for through balls, they never pick anything up unless it's blatantly obvious and they score a lot of own goals. So watch out if you're defending, but go for everything if you're attacking. Got that?

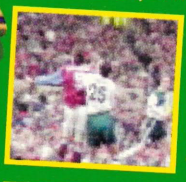


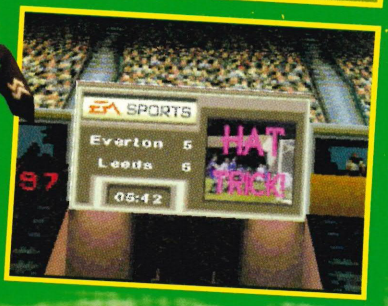




IT'S THE HAT-TRICK!

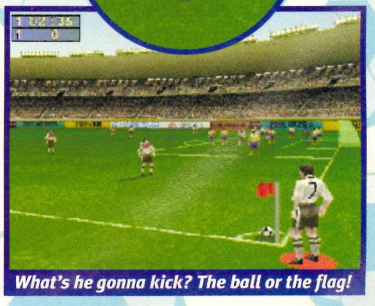
Something which helped to break up the game in the first FIFA – and then annoy you once you'd seen them all – was the FMV sequences. At half-time, full-time and whenever a foul was committed, a small screen would appear that showed clips of Premiership or International action. Thankfully, this time they don't crop up as regularly as before, but at least they're are a little more up-to-date. Now they also appear when a hat-trick is completed, so you get to see someone thumping the ball in the back of the net. Super finish sir!



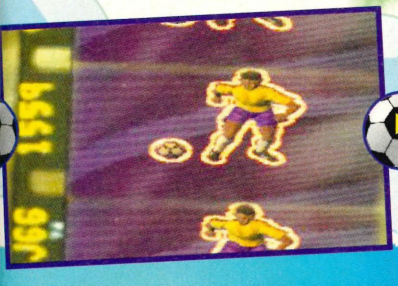


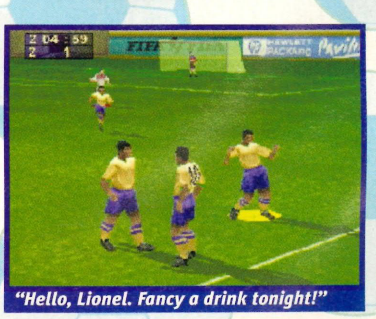
SWAP YOU MALDINI FOR ROBERTS?

FIFA '97 has the luxury of having a sneaky transfer market for you to dabble about in. The thing is, it isn't like the real thing, with the clubs denying all interest in the player and then signing him in a blaze of glory. This is more like swapping stickers in the playground with your mates. Firstly you choose a player you want, and select someone from your team who isn't up to scratch, and then swap them. That's it! So if you support, say Coventry, and the thought of Liam Daish and Brian Borrows isn't exactly what you had in mind for your dream team, then swap them with Baresi and Maldini from AC Milan and laugh as Roberto Baggio teams up with a Birmingham City reject. Chortle! Chortle!



What's he gonna kick? The ball or the flag!





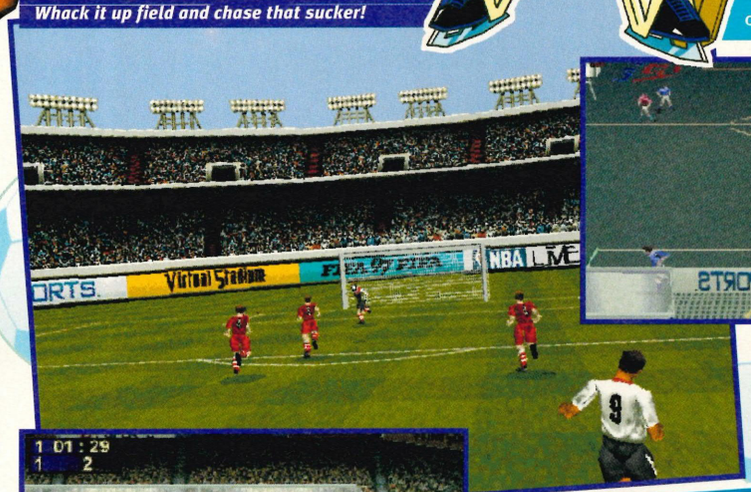
"Hello, Lionel. Fancy a drink tonight!"

REVIEW

IN THE BOX! IN THE BOX!

The most satisfying form of scoring in my book, is definitely banging one in from a corner or a cross. This was nigh on impossible in the first game, but due to the extra animation sequences and moves for the players, you'll be slotting bullet headers away every time! The players get a hell of a lot of power in the headers, so don't be afraid to try your luck from outside the box as well.

Whack it up field and chase that sucker!



The Indoor five-a-side Cripple Cup! Limp faster fool!

STEVE COMMENT

OOHH DEAR. WHAT WENT WRONG IS WHAT I WANT TO KNOW? THE AVERAGE FIFA '96 NOW LOOKS PRETTY GOOD COMPARED TO THIS! GRAPHICALLY, THIS VERSION IS FAR SUPERIOR, BUT WHEN IT MOVES AS SLOW AS THIS – COMPARE A SKODA AND A SNAIL AND YOU'RE THERE – WHO CARES WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE. WHY... DOES... IT... TAKE... SO... LONG? THE BALL HAS TO BE IN EXACTLY THE RIGHT SPOT WHEN YOU KICK OTHERWISE THE PLAYER STOPS AND STARTS THE MOTION CAPTURE FROM A STANDING POSITION, SHOOTING TAKES AN ETERNITY, AND THE GOALIES ARE CRAP. I REALLY WANTED TO LIKE THIS, BUT I CAN'T. GIVE ME SOMETHING QUICKER ANY DAY. PER-LEASE!

SIMON COMMENT

I REALLY, REALLY WANTED FIFA '97 TO BE GOOD. WHEN WE GOT TO PREVIEW IT WE WERE HOPING THAT EA WOULD BE ABLE TO GET THE PLAYING SPEED UP. SADLY, DESPITE ALL THE GINOLA MOTION CAPTURING AND TOP COMMENTARY IT PLAYS LIKE A SQUASHED PUPPY!

OCH! IT'S ANDY GRAY!

We couldn't go the whole of this review without mentioning the commentary. Old boy of the bunch, Motty, is back to burn off our earlobes, but this time he is accompanied by Des Lynam and non Match of the Day regular Andy Gray who has swapped his blank videos and draw-all-over-the-screen-pen for a microphone and a few extra zeros in his bank balance. Lucky sod.

OVERALL

ONLY WORTHY OF A LUCKY CUP RUN AND RELEGATION TO THE THIRD DIVISION. BECAUSE IT PLAYS LIKE A DOG AND IS SO SLOW, IT'S MADE THE NICE GRAPHICS AND AWESOME SOUNDS REDUNDANT. OFFSIDE REF!

93 SOUNDS

82 ANIMATION

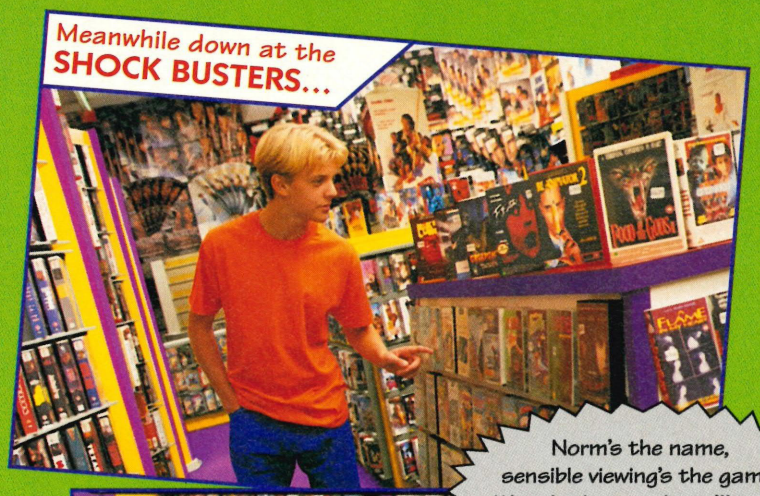
91 GRAPHICS

68 PLAYABILITY

69

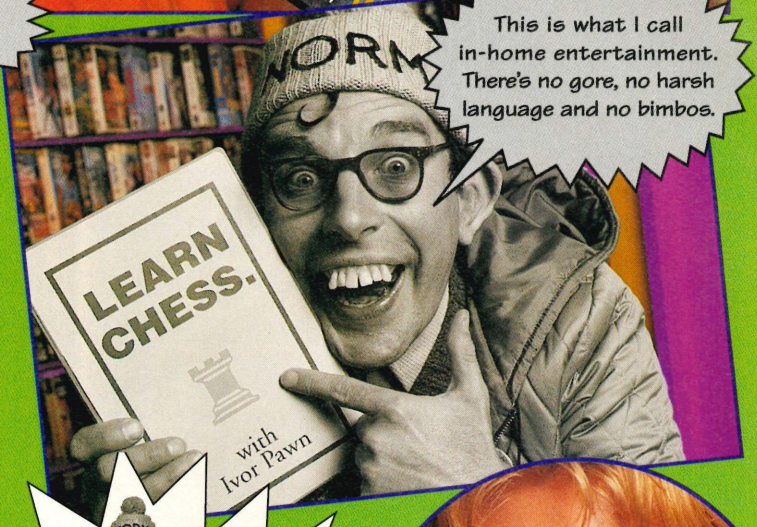
ALTERNATIVES

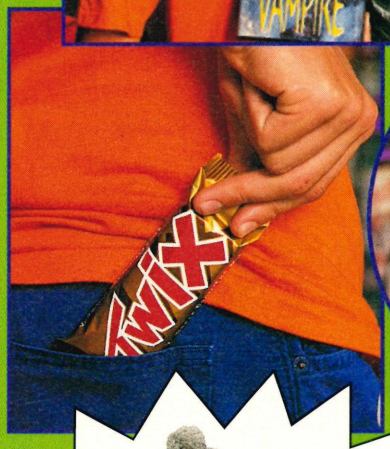
OLYMPIC SOCCER, ISS DELUXE, ADIDAS POWER SOCCER AND FIFA SOCCER.

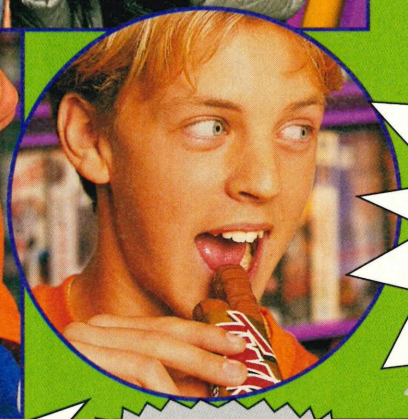

Meanwhile down at the
SHOCK BUSTERS...

This'll do the trick...
REVENGE of the CHICKEN
Blood
VAMPIRE

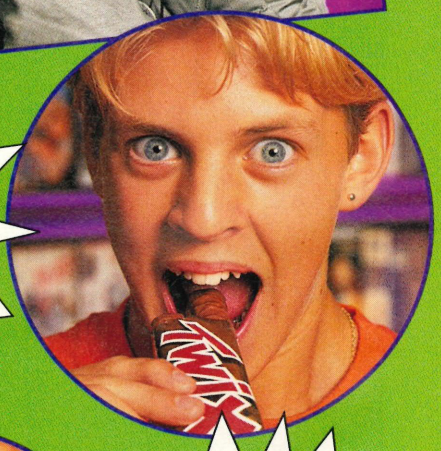
Norm's the name, sensible viewing's the game. Watch that and you'll turn into a zombie!
NORM
REVENGE of the CHICKEN
Blood
VAMPIRE


This is what I call in-home entertainment. There's no gore, no harsh language and no bimbos.
NORM
LEARN CHESS.
with Ivor Pawn

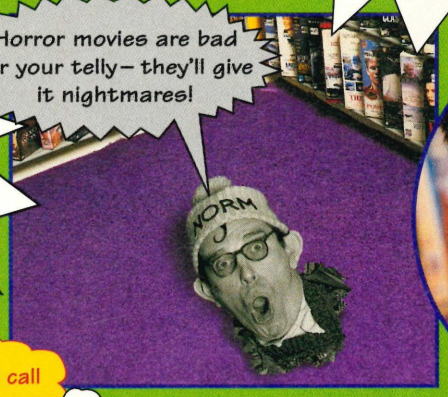

TWIX

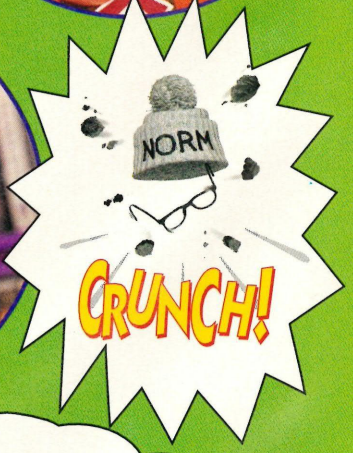


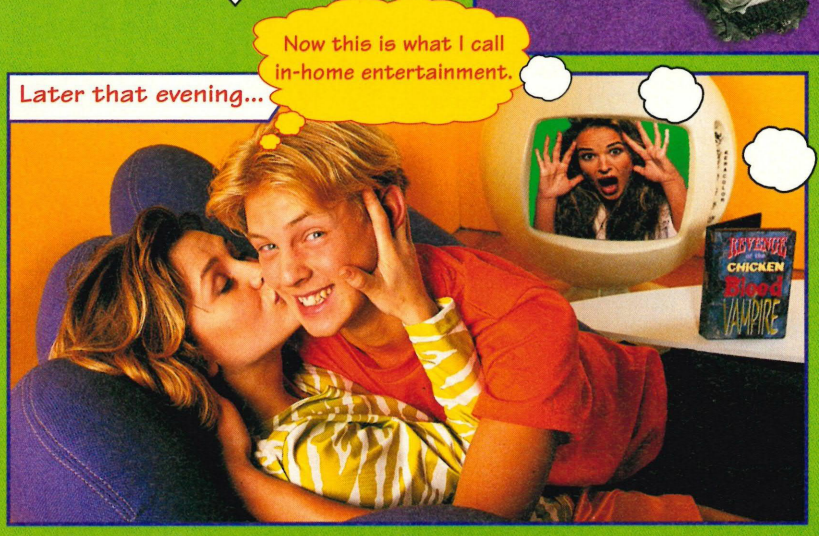
NORM
CRUNCH!


TWIX

NORM
CRUNCH!


Horror movies are bad for your telly – they'll give it nightmares!
NORM


NORM
CRUNCH!


Later that evening...
Now this is what I call in-home entertainment.
REVENGE of the CHICKEN
Blood
VAMPIRE

TWIX
a BREAK FROM THE NORM

REVIEW

1UP

COMMAND and CONQUER

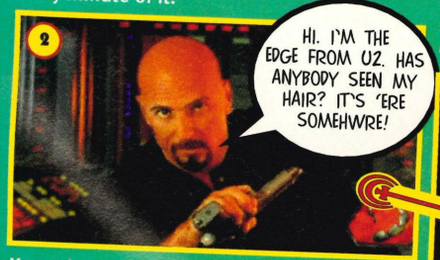
So Tekken 2 lets you beat up other people, you say? Well so what! Command and Conquer lets you build up armies with all manner of fiendish weapon and get involved in some serious genocide! Rock.

Longevity. A big word and a big question: how long will I be playing the game for? Well, you know that you can complete Tekken 2 in about six minutes when you put your mind to it, but you'll certainly take much longer to learn and perform all the moves. Bust A Move 2 is about as simple as they get, but I'm still playing it months after seeing for the first time. And then there's Command and Conquer... the sort of game where a single mission (of which there are about fifty!) can keep you occupied for five hours at a time! Longevity is no longer the question — it's "when can I go to the toilet?" You can control either the goodies (GDI) or the baddies (NOD); you have soldiers, tanks, and weapons of all shapes and sizes; and best of all — the idea is to KILL EVERYTHING. Cool.

ONE MAN, ONE MISSION!

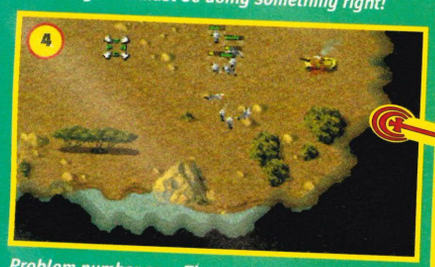
If you caught our mega, four-page preview last issue you'll no doubt be well aware of the many nuances found within C&C (and if you didn't, get back-issuing now!) So, instead of just repeating myself, I thought I'd take you through one of my favourite missions from start to finish. The first time I attempted this mission it took me all day to work out how to succeed, and then another four hours to achieve it! And the best thing — I loved every minute of it!

One of the best things about this level is the fact that, during the mission briefing, the dork in the beret that has been briefing you up until this point gets shot through the head!



Yes, so impressive have you been to get this far, the big bad guy himself — Kain — promotes you to old Beret-nut's position, and briefs you in person. What a privilege — I must be doing something right!

Hmm. The odds are slightly against me... you start this mission with four rocket infantry and six standard soldiers. The best thing to do is group them separately and keep 'em apart so as not to accidentally blow each other up.



Problem number one: There are half-a-dozen soldiers, two grenadiers and a tank to get past before you can do anything else — and you don't exactly have men to sacrifice. Some thoughtful positioning called for here...

Beyond the tank and enemy troops we find a decrepit and derelict old NOD base. We also get a Chinook air-carrier for our troubles — which is pretty damn important as I'm completely cut off from the rest of the map by water!

Having found the base, I find myself with absolutely no cash to play with, and so must sell the old construction yard in order to receive some hard cash, along with a couple of troops and an engineer.

With such limited resources there's only one thing to do — create as many soldiers as possible (along with a couple of VERY important engineers — you'll see why in a mo) and load them into the Chinook.

Call me bonkers, but 'twould seem the only thing to do in such a situation is to fly right into the heart of the GDI camp! Drop the soldiers and engineers and try to capture as many buildings as possible before they retaliate.

Once you've managed to claim an enemy building as your own (by getting an engineer to enter it) it changes to your colour and you're able to build buildings and units with their resources. Cool.

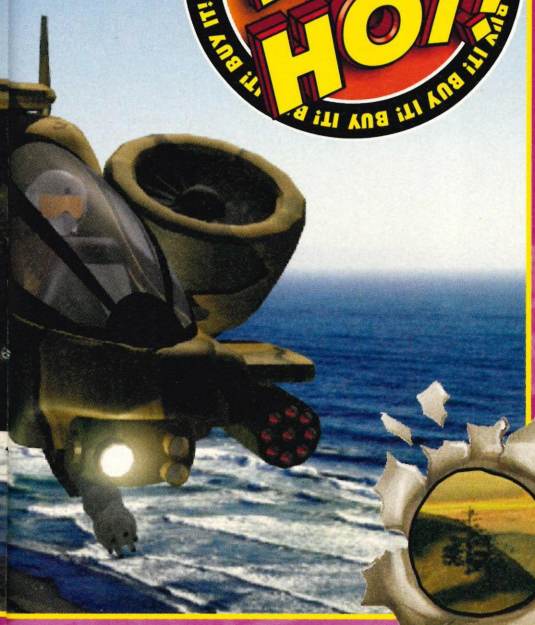
One of the first things to do is build a barracks on this side of the water (thus taking the pressure off the Chinook) and to make it your primary building (ie of your two barracks, this is where new soldiers will appear).

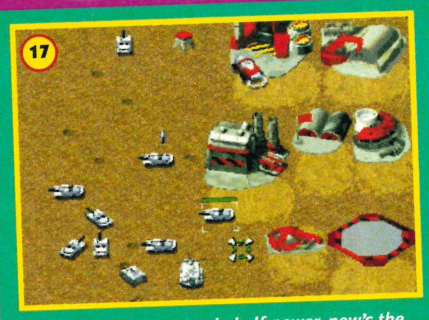
With your operations running from the captured GDI base, you can now return across the river and sell your remaining buildings for some pocket money and for the extra men you'll receive. "Summon the Chinook!"

RED HOT!

BUY IT! BUY IT! BUY IT! BUY IT! BUY IT!

BY: VIRGIN **OUT:** PRE-XMAS **PRICE:** £44.95

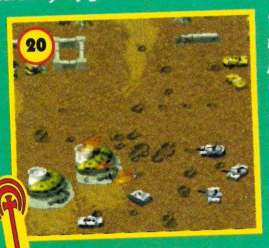




With the GDI base at only half-power, now's the time to spend a while building a formidable force of tanks and fully-loaded APCs. Even if you have to sit waiting for ten minutes, it'll be worth it.

Of course, with the lads away, the base will be vulnerable to attack, so let's just quickly mop up a few of the GDI tanks massing near the construction yard (but too scared by my gun emplacements to attack). BOK!

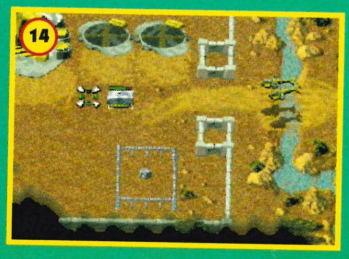
With that out of the way, there's just time (and enough money) to repair any damaged units before the off. Again, it does take up a bit of your time, but you will need the strongest force you can muster. Mister.



"WE HAVE ARRIVED!" No time for subtlety here; just get the boys in and cause as much trouble as possible. This will attract tanks and the like, so now's the time to get the engineers in to take the buildings, leaving the tanks to get stuck in.

GDI troops start to take an interest in what's happened to their old base, but thanks to all the troops transported by the Chinook and the fresh soldiers from my new, primary barracks, it's no problemo. Get back I say!

It's time to become a bit more serious about taking over the world, so time methinks to build a weapons factory; accessing tanks and the like — along with a repair facility and a armoured personnel carrier. 'ere we go, 'ere we go...



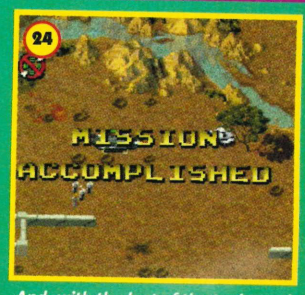
Having loaded up the APC with troops, it's time for a near-suicide run! Make a dash for the heart of the main GDI base in the south-west, and them get 'em out before the APC gets destroyed.

While the troops and escort tanks cause as much damage as possible, now's the time to roll out the engineers and get them into as many buildings as possible. The best tactic here is to sell 'em as soon as they're yours. Great.

While all this is going on, your harvesters should be keeping the money flowing in, so repeat the same plan over and over, and you'll gradually wear the GDI base away — crippling their forces and wasting their resources.

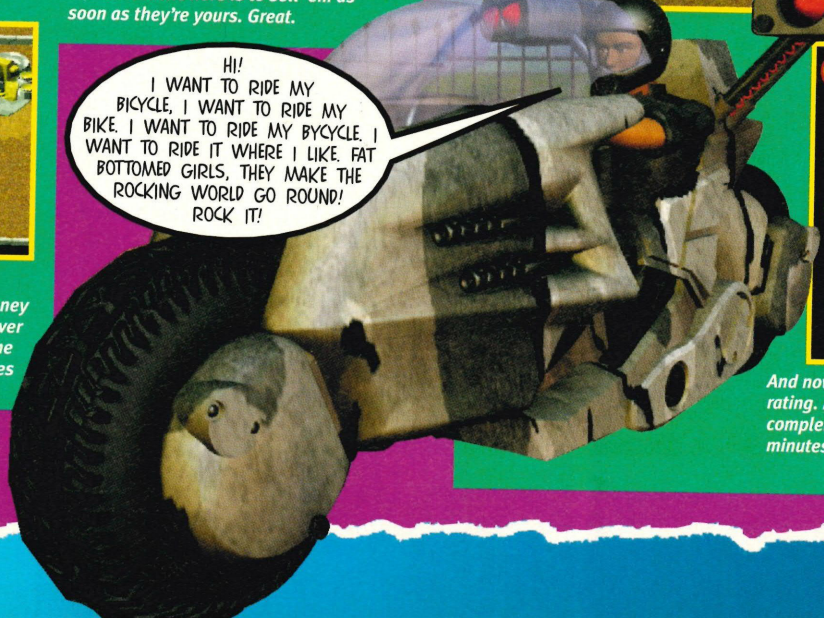
Just when the GDI gits thought things couldn't get any worse, time to play the joker! Call for the Chinook filled with grenadiers to cause some major damage to their power generators. No juice, no chance!

Working my way round the base, a sad, lonely, and landing pad-less Orca chopper (top left) looks on helpless as I wipe away the last of their silos. The end is nigh my friend, the end is nigh...



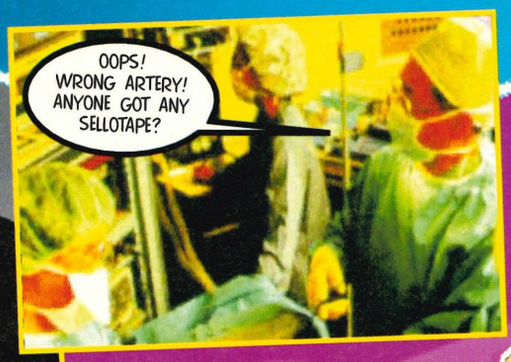
And, with the last of the tanks and troops dispatched, all that remains for me to do is summon a Chinook jam-packed with rocket launcher-equipped infantry to finish off the Orca, and... MISSION COMPLETE! I am victorious. Hip-hurrah!

With the last building finally blown, the last dregs of the GDI contingent make one final attempt to bother me. Unfortunately for them, they are completely Outnumbered, and as in any war of attrition, the greater force has the advantage...

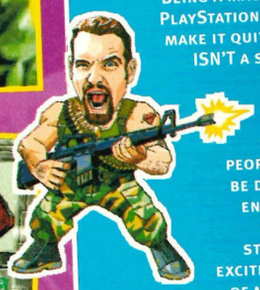


And now's the time to relax and examine my performance rating. Most importantly, lets see how long it took me to complete the mission first time round... two hours and twelve minutes! Crikey. Doesn't time fly when you're having fun!

REVIEW



MATT COMMENT



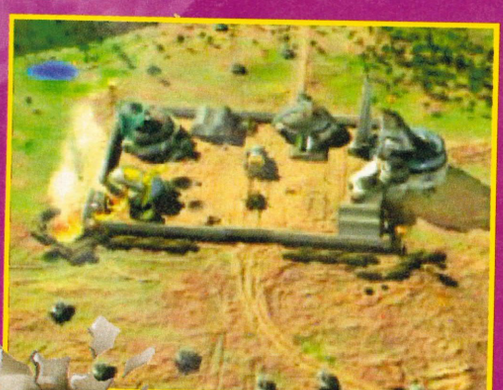
BEING A MAG FOR THE YOUNGER PLAYSTATION GAMER, I WANT TO MAKE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT C&C ISN'T A SHOOT-'EM-UP! YOU WON'T PICK IT UP AND IMMEDIATELY BE RUNNING AROUND SHOOTING PEOPLE. WHAT YOU WILL BE DOING, HOWEVER, IS ENJOYING HOUR AFTER HOUR OF EXCELLENT STRATEGY AND ACTION EXCITEMENT. THE VARIETY OF MISSIONS, WEAPONS AND SCENARIOS MAKE THIS TREMENDOUSLY GOOD VALUE, AND ONE OF MY PERSONAL FAVOURITE PSX TITLES TO DATE. SOME MISSIONS ARE JUST GOOD FUN, BUT BE PREPARED FOR THE FACT THAT OTHERS ARE BLOODY IMPOSSIBLE! A CORKING CLASSIC, NO LESS!

STEVE COMMENT

GENERAL KEY HERE, AND TODAY'S MISSION IS TO GO OUT AND BUY THIS GAME ON THE DOUBLE!! EVEN THOUGH I'M A NOT REALLY A GREAT FAN OF PC CONVERSIONS LIKE THIS, I CAN MAKE AN EXCEPTION FOR C&C BECAUSE IT'S BLINKING AWESOME. IT'S SO PLAYABLE, THE HOURS WILL HAVE PASSED WITHOUT YOU REALISING. ROGER AND OUT!

Pick a territory, any territory... and then BLOW IT UP!

I've no idea how well you'll be able to see this little chap, but for some missions you just get one, rock-'ard Rambo geezer to work through the entire mission. He's well-tough and can shoot people from miles away. Cool.



OVERALL

PERHAPS A BIT TOO 'DEEP' TO ATTRACT THE CASUAL BEAT-'EM-UP OR SHOOT-'EM-UP FAN, BUT FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS TO HEAT THEIR BRAINS SLIGHTLY, THIS IS ABOUT THE BEST THERE IS IN THE STRATEGY GENRE.

92 SOUNDS

86 ANIMATION

86 GRAPHICS

92 PLAYABILITY

92

ALTERNATIVES

X-COM: ENEMY UNKNOWN, WARHAMMER

pitball

A brutal 4-player fest

"Done in the best tradition of the sport and beat 'em up genres" *PlayStation Pro*

"Splendidly brutal" *The Official PlayStation Magazine*

Out now

PlayStation

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REVIEW

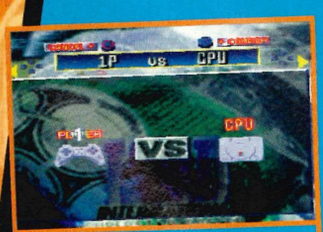
INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER

Time to reach up into your wardrobe, grab that rattle and scarf combo and head for the terraces because it's matchday with International Superstar Soccer!

There are lots of footy games for the 'Station dotted around the dug-outs of yer local software shops. All of them sitting there eagerly waiting for you to pick 'em up and give them their break into the big time. Unfortunately they're all of Sunday league standard and couldn't kick their way out of a half-time orange — well, apart from Olympic Soccer, which concentrated its efforts purely on playability. Anyway, now it's time for Konami to enter the arena for the second time, with their upgrade of the Super NES classic, International Superstar Soccer.

THE GREAT GAME!

Old ISS boasts absolutely tons of different ways in which you can play the beautiful game. Let's now take a gander at what's on offer in a Bob Mills, 'What's the Bobby Moore?' type style-e...



OPEN GAME

The equivalent to a kick about in the park, with the exception that you're playing in some vast stadium. Oh, plus all the sides are of international standard and the likelihood is that you'll be competing against a mate – so the pressure's on! D'oh.

SHORT LEAGUE

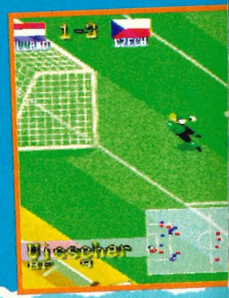
Lets you enter a league of your own that'll allow you to play against up to six of yer chums. Winning means you can clench a fist at your defeated mates and laugh with pickled onion breath in their faces!

INTERNATIONAL CUP

A little cup of your own that lets you compete in a scary knockout tournament. Success will see you lifting the cup for all and sundry, defeat will see you with the Scotland squad on the bus home!

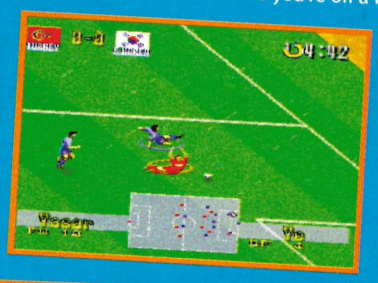
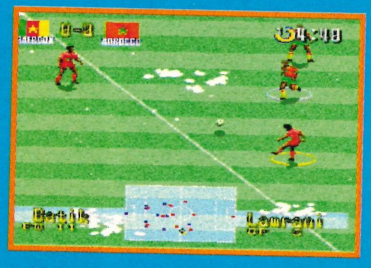
WORLD SERIES

All 32 of your internationally renowned sides play one another in a league system. If you really want to learn the CPU opponents, winning this tournament could be the one for you – although it might take your entire pro career to do it!



ALWAYS TAKE THE WEATHER WITH YOU!

Footy being footy, when you're playing for the First XL school team it always absolutely chucks it down! That or you're dribbling down the wing, dodging puddles, before sliding through icy slush to deliver that frozen footed cross that shoves about six cubes of snow up yer clackers! Yes folks, ISS delivers that too, 'cos you can choose your weather conditions! Play in the wet and the ball sticks in the goalmouths and trundles along as if a fairie had kicked it in a pair of magic er, fairy slippers. Conversely, play while the sun beats down on your Umbro top and the bounce feels like you're on a five-a-side court. Ah, you Brazilian!

AAAAAACCCCCCCCCI IIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIDD!

You might well be quite within your rights to beg the question as to why all these little smiley faces bounce up and down at you during several of your option menus. Well let us at MMP enlighten you. The different colours and smiles on your players' faces relate to their general health, stamina and overall fitness to play. A man with a long face and not much bounce to the ounce is unlikely to offer you much... or so the ladies say! Ahem.

GOOOOAALLLLACHIO!!!

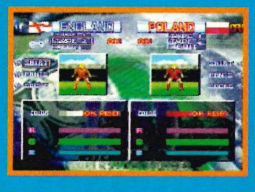
After all that training and tricky tactical management, your gameplan works and you score that vital goal. Thankfully ISS lets its little sprite driven characters perform a variety of lairish celebrations. Here for your enjoyment are a few of those choice moments where we see Ravanelli pull his top over his head or Merson doing his lager-lager-lager impression.

MAN O MAN!

Another of the features in ISS is your ability to man-to-man mark opposing players. This comes in well handy because each of the ISS teams have 'Star Players' that have that little bit of extra pace or skill about them. All you have to do is flip to the 'Man to man' option and click on the relevant players. So, your Tony Adams can try and cripple that Frenchy toad Ginola each and every game. Ha! Ha! Ha!

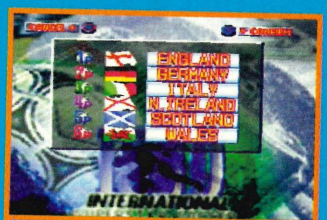
IT'S THE KIT IT'S ITCHY...

Tired of jogger's nipple from that scratchy nylon top? Well, in ISS you can customise your team's kit and do with it whatsoever you wish. If you fancy your lot to walk onto the park in a pink top with yellow shorts, so be it. However, expect to be ridiculed by the opposition and still have jogger's niplet!



SCENARIO

Twelve – count 'em – in-game situations that really put you under the cosh. For example, you're 9-0 down to The Easter Island Select – can you pull back the nine goals in the time it takes the ref to send Julian Dicks off in an average West Ham game?



SHORT TOURNAMENT

Not at all unlike Tournament, no siree this as you'd expect – a 'short' knockout competition that grants you just one shot at going through! Careful management of such things as set pieces and man-to-man marking need to be attended to, otherwise it's penalty city for you!

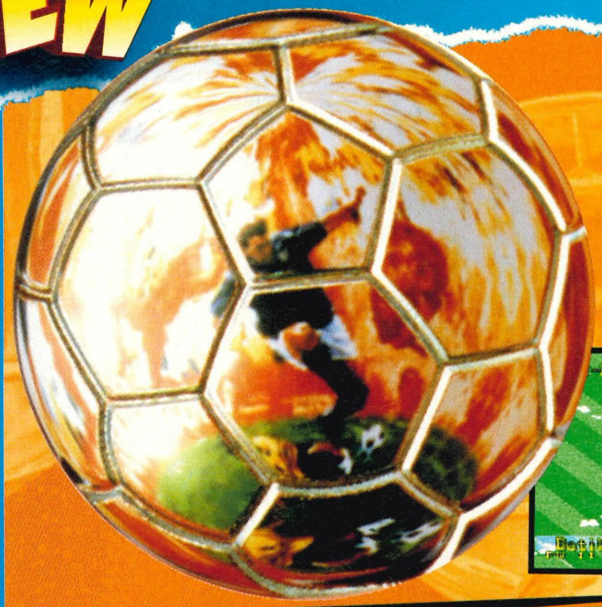
PENALTY SHOOT-OUT

Pick five of your bestest players and take on the might of any side in a formidable penalty shoot-out competition. Make sure not to play against the flippin' Germans though, 'cos you know how spawny they are when it comes to pens!

TRAINING

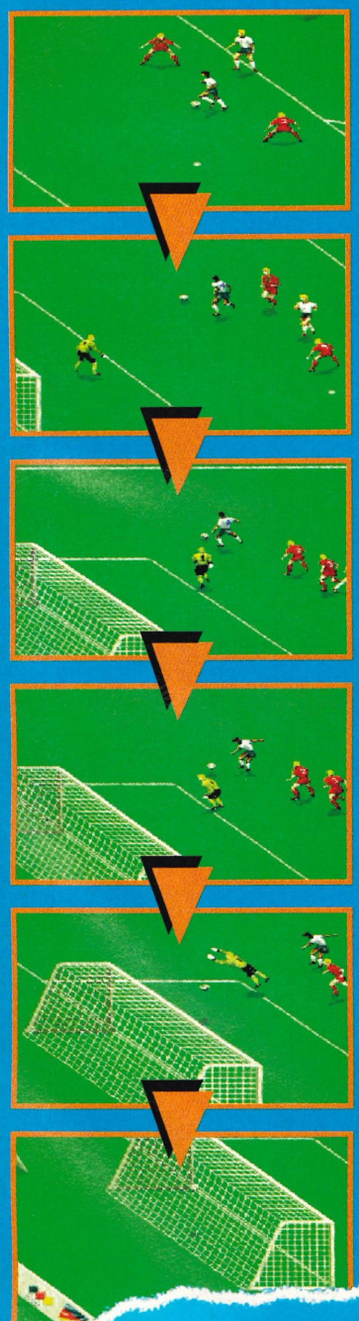
Where would a successful side be without training? Waiting outside Upton Park for Harry Redknapp's my best bet! Anyway, Konami's footy game allows you to train each and everybody, either as individual units or as a whole team. Bonding or what, lads!

REVIEW

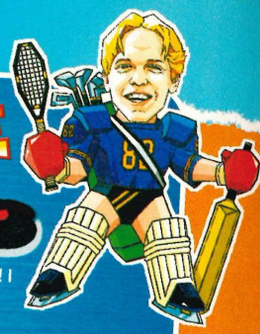


THE DODGY 45 DEGREE GOAL!

Practically every footy game has one, and ISS is absolutely no exception: yes, the spawny goal is still alive and kicking! Simply run towards goal at 45°, try to draw the keeper out and then either shoot (for an effort the keeper can only parry) or come slightly away from goal – committing him – and then shoot. You are now a winner! If in doubt please speak to Steve "cheesy Hammers jellied eels" Merrett.



STEVE COMMENT



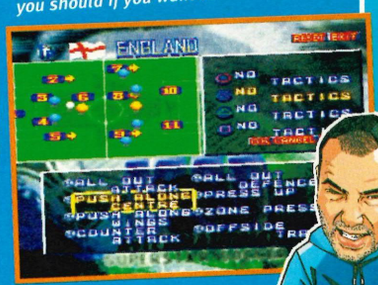
BLIMEY, THIS BRINGS BACK MEMORIES! I HAVE TO SAY THOUGH, THAT HAVING WITNESSED ALL OF THE 3D FOOTIE AFFAIRS, I MUCH PREFER THOSE! DON'T BE FOOLED BY ME THOUGH, AS ISS PLAYS SUPERBLY AND EVEN THOUGH IT MAY GET A LITTLE ANNOYING, THE COMMENTARY IS PRETTY COOL TOO. BUT OVERALL, I'D WAIT FOR ISS PRO!

SORT IT OUT BOSS!

There's more to ISS than just the game itself. Before your lads even get their pads half-way up their ankles, there's tactics to consider. We've already spoken about the man-to-man options available to you, but there's more to glance at before you give your boys the final pre-match rant...

SELECT SQUAD

Replace the guys with long faces with chaps who have more bounce and a face that smiles! Well, you don't have to, but you should if you want to win!

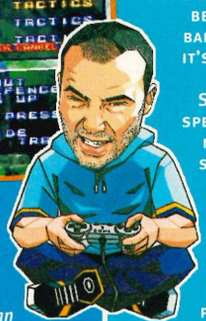


FORMATION CHANGE

Here you can select your formation as well as set those wing-backs in motion and turn them into attack minded chaps. You can also alter your entire team's shape.

ADJUST STRATEGY

This option allows your little Alex Ferguson to set strategies that can be introduced into the game at any given time. Here we see an inevitable off-side trap being set!



SIMON COMMENT

I OWNED ISS DELUXE ON ME OLD SNES BEFORE IT GOT HIDDEN AWAY AND BANISHED TO 16BIT WORLD. WELL, IT'S BACK FOR YOUR PSX, AND NOT THAT MUCH DIFFERENT TO THE SUPER NES VERSION. OKAY, THE SPEECH IS ENHANCED AND THERE'S NO SLOWDOWN AT ALL, BUT YOU SHOULD EXPECT THAT AND MORE ON A 32BIT MACHINE LIKE OURS! HAVING SAID THAT, ISS STILL RETAINS ITS PLAYABILITY AND ADDICTIVE NATURE EVEN THOUGH WE'RE DEALING WITH LOWLY SPRITES AND NOT THE POLYGON 'EYE-CANDY' WE'VE ALL GOT USED TO ON THE 'STATION. WHILE IT'S GOOD, I CAN'T HELP THINKING THAT THIS WAS A BIT OF A COP OUT AND THAT ISS COULD REALLY HAVE BEEN SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR THE PSX. LET'S JUST HOPE KONAMI DO A 'PROPER' 32BIT VERSION OF ISS.

OVERALL

IT'S A SOLID ENOUGH PERFORMER THAT FEELS GOOD TO PLAY AND BOASTS A WIDE RANGE OF OPTIONS AND TACTICS FOR YOU TO FOOL WITH. BUT YOU CAN'T HELP THINKING A LOT MORE COULD HAVE BEEN DONE.

80 SOUNDS

77 ANIMATION

72 GRAPHICS

90 PLAYABILITY

79

ALTERNATIVES

ACTUA SOCCER, OLYMPIC SOCCER OR ADIDAS POWER SOCCER

CAPTURE IT!

RETURN FIRE

"A perfect combination of destruction, filthy cunning and devilish humour make this one of the best 2 player games ever made."

C&VG 5 OUT OF 5

"Pure playability."

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WARNER INTERACTIVE

REVIEW

We've had an onslaught of racing games revving towards our trusty grey box of tricks. Well, now Gremlin enter the race with their novel off-road number, Hardcore 4X4. Time to zip up those wellies and go crosscountry methinks...

Boys and cars eh. It's like strawberries and cream, Laurel and Hardy, rhubarb and custard or even Ant and Dec, er no strike that one and pretend you never, ever saw that I wrote it! But you get the gist of what I was trying to say, don't you? You just walk down any street on a Sunday morning and there they'll be: applying a coat of T-Cut, sliding on that 'master and slave' sunstrip, dropping a new bassbin onto the parcel shelf or just getting it ready for the afternoon's testosterone exercise. I mean how many times have you been out with yer mum in her new Metro, only to pull up at the lights and have some nibber draw level in his 1.3L Capri with fat tyres, Halfords bodykit and steering wheel the size of a ten pence piece? Loads. And what happens, the prat stalls it and your ma coolly tootles away to Tescos. It's a disgrace to the male species! Tsch, far better to stay home and do the racing on yer 'Station!

STAR TRUCKIN...

Welcome to Honest Hank's Used Car lot. Payment can be split over 48 months and we also do 0% finance. Follow my Mr. Byrite strides out to the lot if you per-lease...

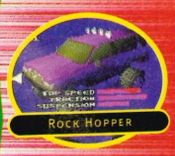
The Bushmaster is a pretty good motor to start racing with. Its got reasonable all-round abilities, is good on fuel and nippy through that city traffic. Quite the motor to take down to Harrods.

No, it's not a car vac, it's a 4X4 that's pretty quick and boasts reasonable all-round grip. Watch that sexy red paint job when you're tanking around those rocky passes! This is probably the best all round car.

Apart from the Rock Hopper, the Ice Breaker has the best traction of the cars – giving you that grip you need. It's also the car with a full roof, so that anyone travelling with you in the back stays nice and dry!

Hardly a missile of a car, but it does boast the best suspension of all the off-roaders in Hardcore 4X4. So, while you won't tank around the hills and vales, you won't get a sore botty either. Pant-tastic!

Great suspension, but hardly the fastest 0-60 on the motorway and not very good for taking the kids anywhere with all that coal in the back! Unless you're Scrooge giving out Chrissy presents that is!



These little beauties are your average Essex runaround. Nice colour, but very poor in the handling department especially when it's snowing in Canvey Island. Still, it's got a nice stereo though. Boom tish!

PUT THE PEDAL TO THE MEDAL!

Hardcore 4X4 isn't simply about slamming yer foot down on the old accelerator. Much of the skill in beating the other drivers comes from knowing the best way to handle the camber and slope of the courses. Simply taking the wrong angle up a hill can make the difference between racing to the front of the pack or winding up A over T with a dented roof! D'oh!

BY: GREMLIN OUT: DECEMBER PRICE: £49.99

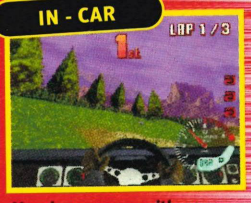
A VIEW TO BE ILL!

Hardcore 4X4, like most drive-y games, features a variety of views from which to race. Here then, for your deliberation are those field and farmyard type views...

BONNET VIEW

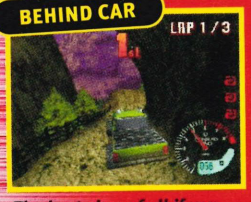
Here you are practically on the damn bonnet of the car! Be warned this view will probably make you vomit after a minute or so of negotiating hills!

IN - CAR



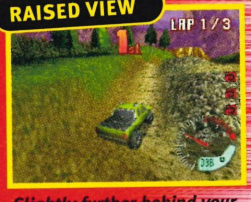
Yes, here we go with your dodgy looking arms and one frame of animation that steers as you press the Dpad left and right. Completely unconvincing!

BEHIND CAR



The best view of all if you prefer winning a race to throwing up all over your beloved PlayStation!

RAISED VIEW

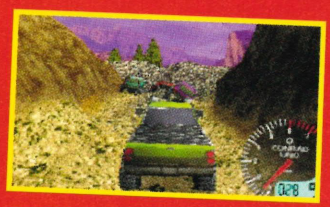


Slightly further behind your vehicle the 'C5' view follows your vehicle from quite a way behind the fray!

DRIVIN' MISS CRAZY!

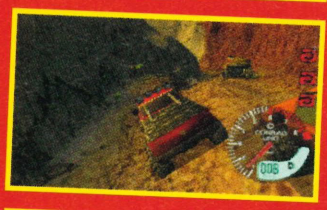
What do you reckon we take a little trundle around the different tracks – if I can call them that – in one our of Land Rover type vehicles...

DYNAMITE PASS



The easiest of the courses, being the first, that sees you double de-clutching yer big 4X4 around a mountain pass littered with bridges and bumps. Even that Italian mechanic er, Mario could beat this one!

GROUND ZERO GULCH

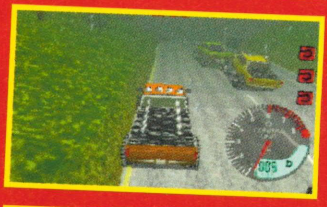


In the heat of the Arizona desert – perhaps – you'll need a six pack of er, Coca-Cola to keep your thirst at bay. This twisty turny course finds you charging through dangerously thin chasms and tunnels. Scary!

DEVIL'S KITCHEN

None of yer mum's home cooking in this desert inferno. Wicked undulations throw your off-roader so much that you could mix porridge! Beware of the camels and watch out for the Desert Storm tanks!

MURCURIAL FOREST

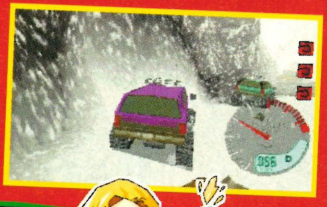


Here we go on the trail of the lonesome pine! Yep, this bugger of a track takes you up into the clean mountain air and is filled with real tricky passes and humpbacks to negotiate – that's undulations, not people!

HADES HIGHWAY

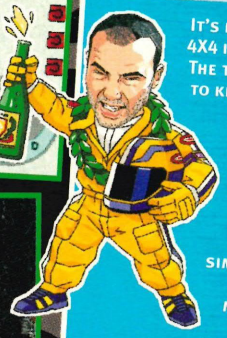
Imagine driving yer dad's car with no lights on in the pitch black and that's Hades Highway. An absolute nightmare of a track that epitomises the phrase 'the blind leading the blind'! This is major dust city dude!

ARCTIC INFERNO



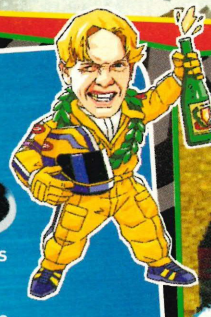
It's time to get that elbow back in off the window and turn the heater up to the max! Yep, it's colder than a polar bear's undercarriage and twice as slippy in the Arctic Inferno. Not even Persil gets these whites!

SIMON COMMENT



It's hard to fault Hardcore 4X4 in any major way at all. The tracks all vary enough to keep you interested and graphically they look really neat. It also plays pretty well and, even though none of us have been overland in a 4X4 vehicle, it seems to simulate the experience as you'd imagine – making you feel quite sick. But with the PlayStation driving sim market busier than the M25 on a Monday morning you've got to question whether there's a place for yet another racing game. Don't get me wrong, I really enjoyed playing Gremlin's first 'Station driving game, but with games like F1, DD2, Burning Road and Ridge Racer Rev around I think Hardcore might find itself engaged in an uphill struggle!

STEVE COMMENT



For a game of this nature, this works really well. The feeling you get of being off-road as it were is pretty smart. But having said that, I have to agree with Si, in that there are a lot better racers already on the market. Not bad though.

OVERALL

Good solid driving frolics can be found in Hardcore 4X4 and there's enough in here to keep you occupied, but if you've already got a few of our alternatives you might find the shelf-life a little short!

ALTERNATIVES

Ridge Racer Revolution, Burning Road or F1.

80 SOUNDS

88 ANIMATION

85 GRAPHICS

82 PLAYABILITY

80

REVIEW

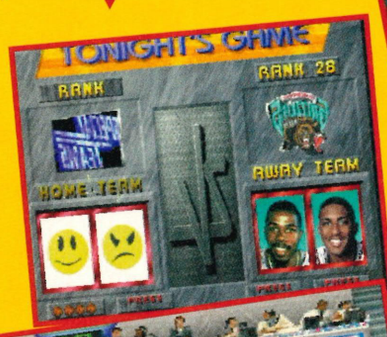
We've had all the serious Basketball sims – two of which are elsewhere in this very issue – so now we have the inflated heads, acid man faces playing with a beach ball version. Sounds good, eh?

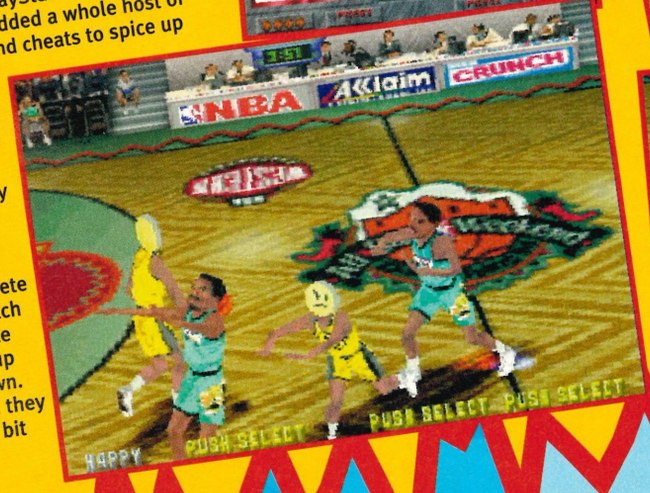
NBA JAM EXTREME

Basketball is probably the most popular overseas sports in Britain at the moment. How can you tell? Because every developer and their dog are currently programing, or have finished programing an NBA spin off title! Chuck in some fancy animations, lots of trainer squeaks and some commentator going "Reeeeejected!" all the time, and — Bob's your uncle — kids everywhere go slam dunking crazy! Acclaim's latest trip down the NBA Jam high street sees them do a little more than just window shop. This is because they've gone and revamped the game completely, turning it into the kind of 3D affair that we are becoming accustomed to. Ah, but will the old Jam magic still come out amidst all those polygons? Well that's what we're here for! Let's get it on!

SHINY HAPPY PEOPLE!

It's time for mirth, merriment and much elation all round, as we introduce you to the Smileys! Those crazy bonkers people at Sculptured Software (who developed the PlayStation version) have gone and added a whole host of stupid tweaks and cheats to spice up the game a little more. Here we have the Smiley team, represented by nothing more than spaced-out acid man faces, complete with eye patch for the pirate and make-up for the clown. Super. And they can play a bit as well!

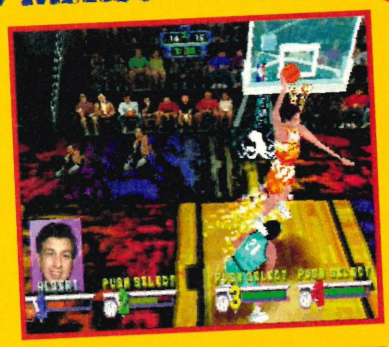


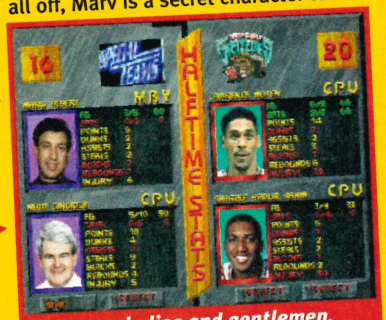


BY: ACCLAIM OUT: OUT NOW! PRICE: £44.95

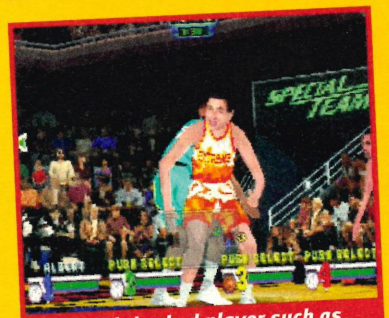
WHO THE HELL IS MARV ALBERT?

Followers of the real thing will know who I'm talking about. The Marv Albert in question is in fact one of the most well known American Sports commentators, covering all of the major sports Stateside, with basketball being his speciality. As you've probably gathered by now, he also does the commentary for Extreme, armed with all of the cheesy catch phrases that makes Jam what it is... "Is it the shoes?" and other waffle about the hang time (eh?) and to top it all off, Marv is a secret character too!





"Come on ladies and gentlemen. Pick a team, any team..." Etc, etc.



It's hunch-backed player such as these that give NBA a bad name!

ALLEY-OOP TO KEMP!

Another neat addition to Extreme is the alley-oop. Basically, for those Jam virgins not in the know, it involves one player throwing the ball up just short of the net for the other player on his side to run in, catch it mid air and slam, giving everyone watching premium satisfaction. If you can get this to work it'll score very highly on the flash-o-meter when playing your mates!

Do my eyes deceive me, or is that team invisible? SATAN BE GONE!

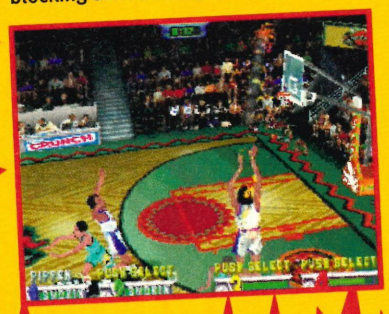
WHO SAID THAT?

We've had the beach ball, and the Smiley team, now meet... the Invisible Team! Why have bodies when you can have nothing at all, that's what we say! By entering the right codes on the name record screen, you can call up these mysterious b'ballers. But how can you tell which character is yours when you can't see them? Well, as well as their uniforms, they have additional clothing. One has a pair of shades, one has a rainbow hat, and Jim Jung wears a ninja-style bandanna!

Esta completemente babibo! The players 'ave gorn transparent!

I SMELL SMOKE... PARP!

Veteran Jammers will remember that one of the best bits about the previous games was the ability to be "On Fire!" This is where you become hot, hot, hot and almost every shot you take goes in. The difference is, there are now two sorts of hot-ness. One is, as before, gained by simply scoring three baskets, at which point trails of fire will follow your player around. The other is more protective. If you make three blocks in a row, your energy bar begins to smoke as usual, but the fire trails have turned to smoke, and you're now defensively sorted, making blocking and stealing much easier.



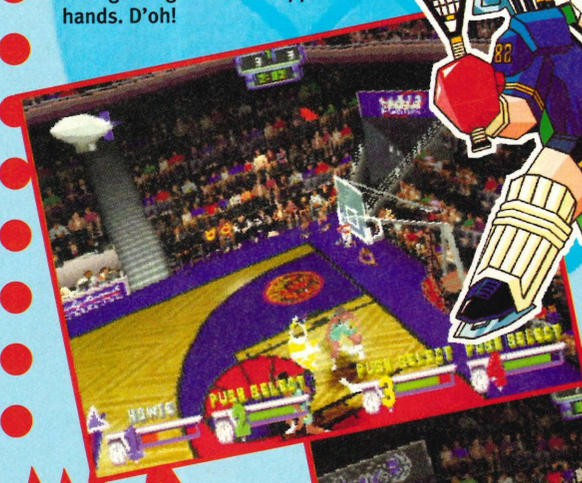
He's on fire, and... he's airborne! Take to the skies and dunk it. BOK!

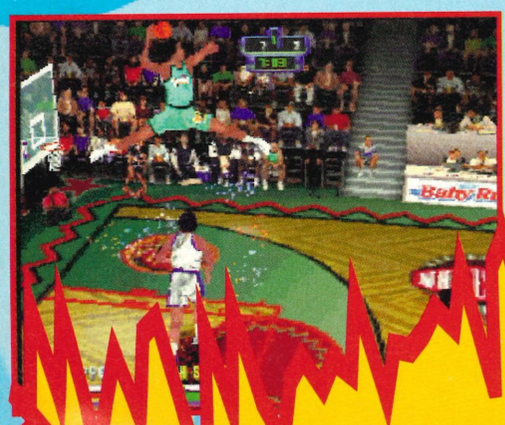
REVIEW

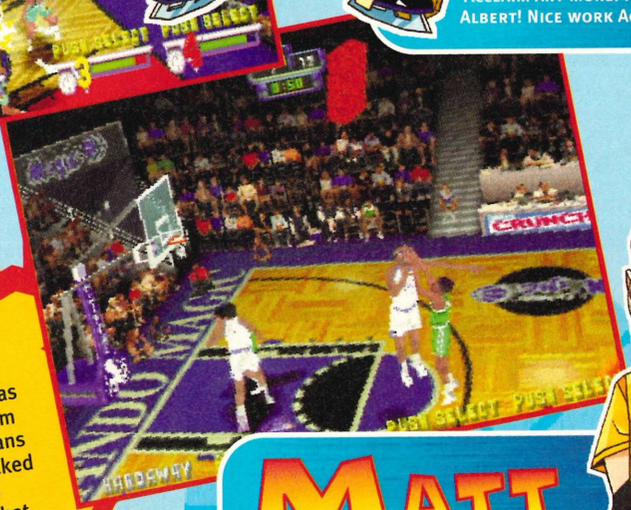
The gang prepare to form a human pyramid for the audience's delight. Crazy guys, or what!

PUTS UP A BRICK!

There are good shots, unlucky shots, bad shots and shots that are so downright awful, that not even Tony Adams would be associated with them – shots, spirits, alcohol geddit? Anyway, when the game recognises an effort of this nature, it changes the the ball to a spinning brick accompanied by a "Puts up a brick!" comment from Marv to illustrate just how bad it really was! Usually they end up twanging off the backboard, and falling straight into the opponents hands. D'oh!

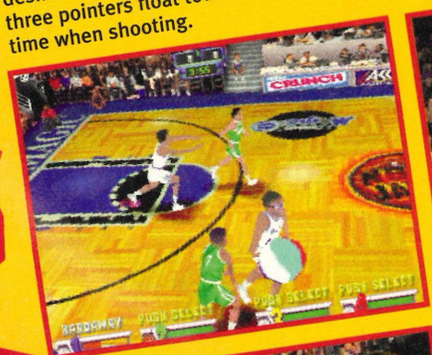


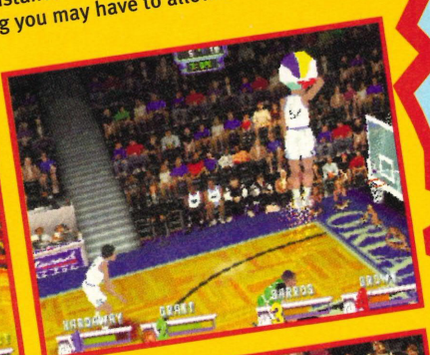


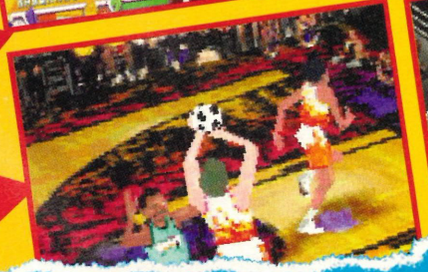


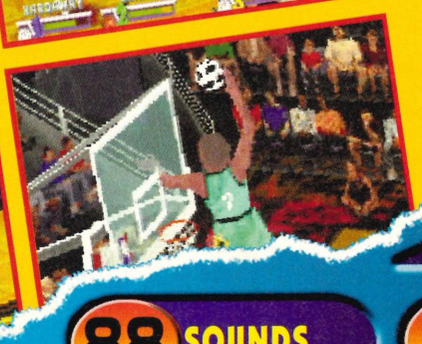
PLEASE MISTER, CAN WE HAVE OUR BALL BACK?

Basketball is meant to be played with, erm, basketballs right? But if someone has robbed your school cupboard, or the games teacher has 'forgotten' to pump them up – PE teachers prefer Rugby anyway – then you'll have to find alternative means to satisfy your slam-dunking needs. Well, it seems someone in Extreme has nicked the balls as well, because you can play with a beach ball or a football if you so desire! Both of these balls effect shots, for instance the beach ball is so light that three pointers float towards the net, meaning you may have to allow a little extra time when shooting.

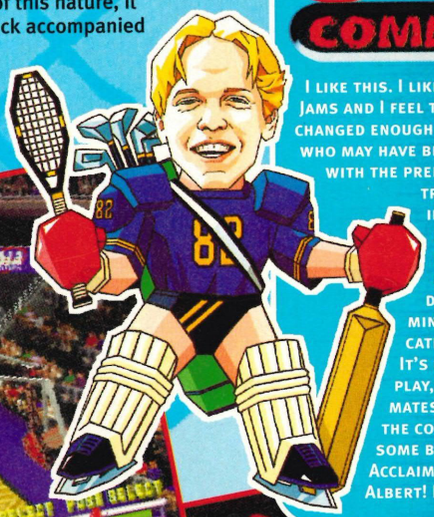








STEVE COMMENT



I LIKE THIS. I LIKED ALL THE PREVIOUS JAMS AND I FEEL THAT THIS HAS CHANGED ENOUGH TO PLEASE ALL THOSE WHO MAY HAVE BECOME A LITTLE BORED WITH THE PREDECESSORS. THE 3D TREATMENT WAS INEVITABLE FOR JAM, BUT THE WAY THAT THIS HAS BEEN EXECUTED, MEANS THAT IT DOESN'T FALL INTO THE MINDLESS UPGRADE CATEGORIES OF GAMES. IT'S REALLY GOOD FUN TO PLAY, ESPECIALLY WITH MATES, IT LOOKS NICE, AND THE COMMENTATOR ISN'T SOME BLOKE WHO WORKS FOR ACCLAIM ANY MORE: IT'S MARV ALBERT! NICE WORK ACCLAIM.

MATT COMMENT

YEAH, I'LL GO WITH YOUNG STEVARINO ON THIS. ACCLAIM HAVE MADE A GOOD JOB OF SPICING THINGS UP VISUALLY, AND WHILE THE GAMEPLAY RETAINS THE SIMPLE FUN OF, SAY, JAM TE, IT HAS ENOUGH NEW MOVES AND SILLY INCLUSIONS TO WARRANT FURTHER PURCHASE. THIS IS CERTAINLY THE ONE TO GET IF YOU WANT THE FUNKY VISUALS OF IN THE ZONE AND TOTAL, BUT CAN'T BE ARSED TO GET ALL SERIOUS ABOUT THINGS. PERSONALLY, I'D PROBABLY BE MORE INCLINED TO SCORE THIS IN THE MID-EIGHTIES, BUT THEN BASKETBALL'S NOT REALLY MY THANG!

OVERALL

DON'T BE PUT OFF BY THE FACT THAT THIS IS ANOTHER NBA JAM GAME. ALL-NEW GRAPHICS, LOADS OF SECRETS AND HEAPS OF PLAYABILITY MEAN THAT EXTREME IS HERE TO STAY. AND IT IS CERTAINLY MORE THAN THE SHOES!

ALTERNATIVES
NBA LIVE '97, TOTAL NBA
NBA IN THE ZONE 2.

88 SOUNDS

91 ANIMATION

90 GRAPHICS

91 PLAYABILITY

90

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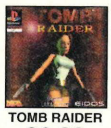

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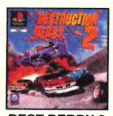

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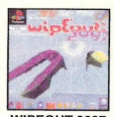

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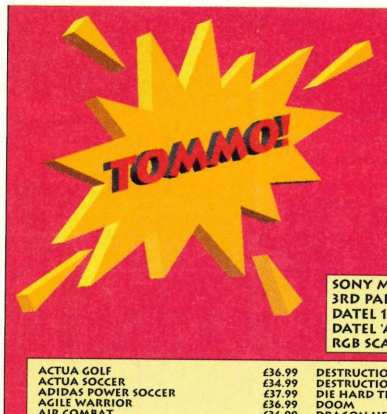

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REVIEW

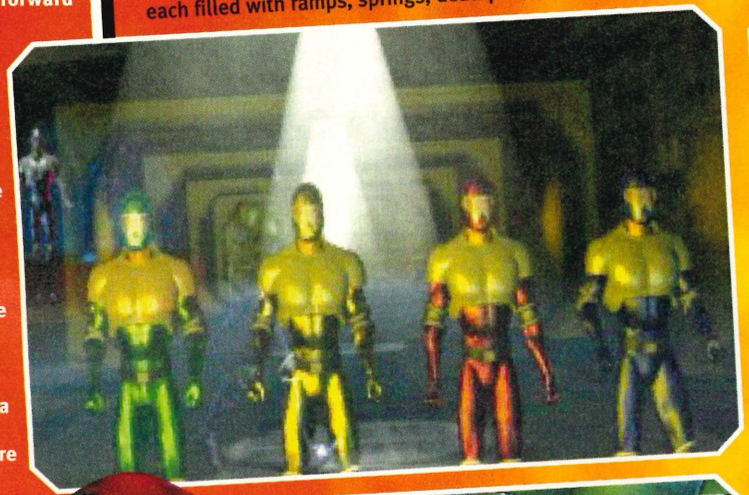
BLAST CHAMBER

Someone, somewhere is being original. This, me ol' muckers, is a good thing because it leads to interesting games. Activision stand accused, and judgment is about to be made.

What WILL games of the future be like, I wonder? Various computer games and films have done their best to make predictions, and as a result we have the likes of Rollerball, Speedball, Anti-grav Racing (you know, WipEout) and Running Man shows to look forward to. Of course, the recurring theme throughout is the inclusion of danger and violence. And what, oh chums of mine, could be more dangerous and violent than having a time bomb strapped to your chest while opponents try their best to speed up your countdown! Well that's where we find ourselves with Activision's Blast Chamber; a frantic race against the clock, set inside a number of rooms that can be rotated and jumped around. As a one-player it's a clever puzzle game, but as a multi-game, ah... that's where the REAL fun begins!

LITTLE MEN IN LITTLE BOXES!

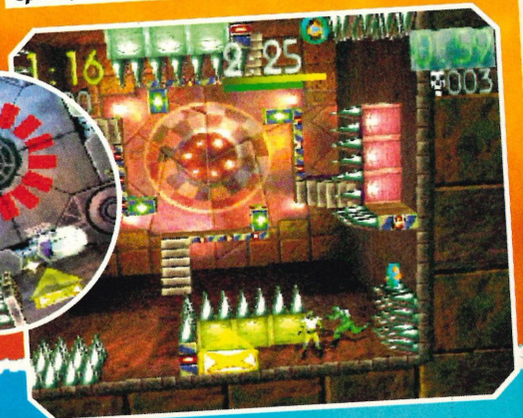
Just having tons of little men bombing (boom boom!) around in small boxes would be pretty boring, so each room one can be revolved by pushing against the arrows on the walls. This affects all but the responsible player, hurling everyone else through the air and jolting any held crystals from their hands. There are also twenty different rooms (forty in one-player), each filled with ramps, springs, deathpits, etc. to play in. Let's go have a look...



Like a windmill ever-turning, like a wheel within a wheel. Like sausage, egg and bacon, like a meal within a meal!

Hi. I'm Red Player. Thanks to my magnetic boots I can run up walls — even when the room is turning. Great.

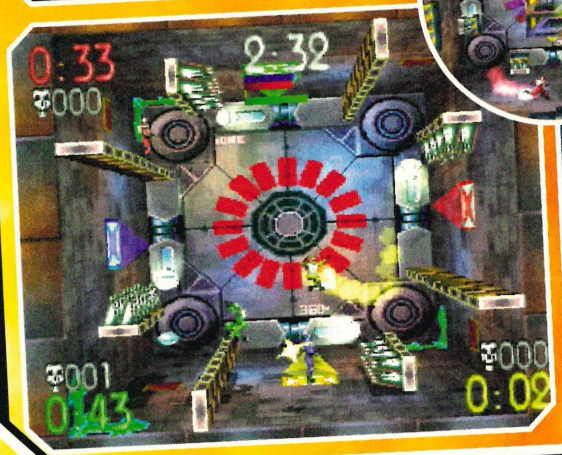
This is a killer! Not only are the walls covered with huge spikes, but there are trap doors all over the place. ARG!



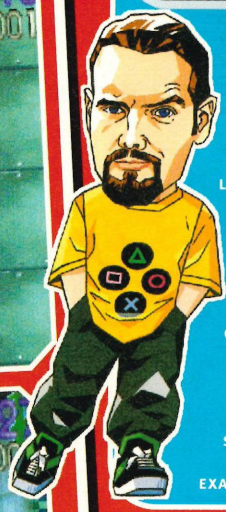
BY: ACTIVISION OUT: PRE-XMAS PRICE: £44.99

I DO BELIEVE I'VE GONE AND BLOWN ORF!

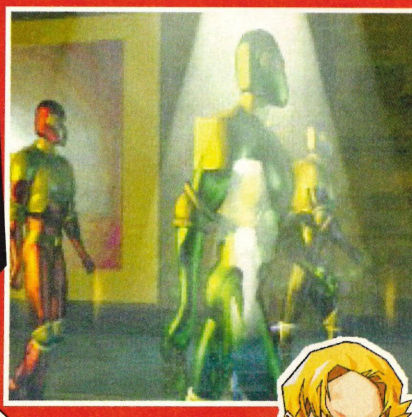
The rules are simple: you — and any active opponents — have bombs strapped to your chests, each counting down to detonation and certain death. The only way to stop this from happening is to drop crystals that appear into your own and your opponents' reactors. The only problem here is that there's only one crystal at a time, and up to four players fighting for it. Bugger. Still, that's what the punch button's for! With, might I add, 'hilarious consequences'.



MATT COMMENT

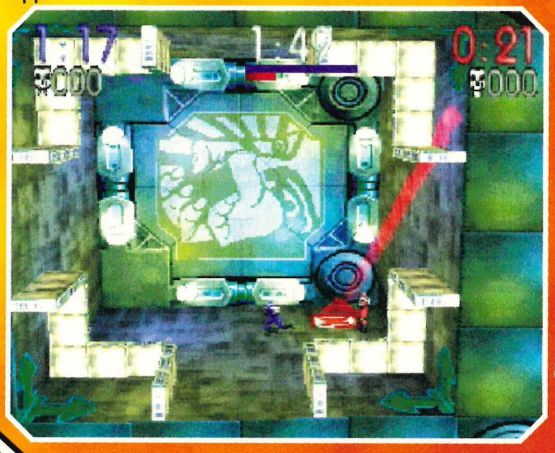


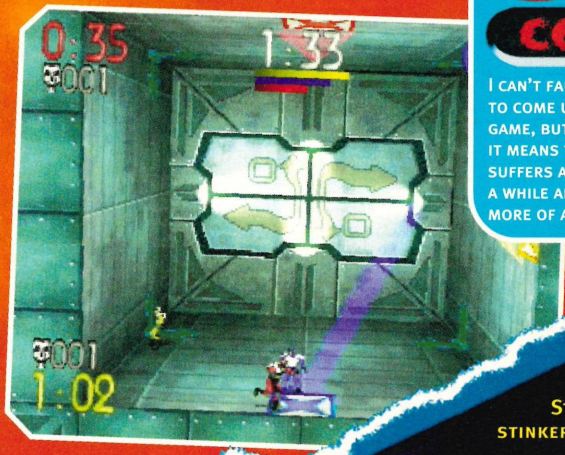
IT'S VERY HARD TO KNOW WHAT TO SAY ABOUT BLAST CHAMBER. IT SCORES WELL FOR ORIGINALITY, BUT SOMEHOW DOESN'T FEEL QUITE, ER... 'ALL THERE'. AS A ONE-PLAYER GAME IT FEELS LIKE A PUZZLE GAME, AND AS A MULTI-PLAYER GAME IT'S FUN BUT HECTIC AND CONFUSING. I ACTUALLY FOUND IT PLAYED BEST AS A 'BEAT-YOUR-BEST-TIME' WITH ONLY ONE OR TWO OTHER OPPONENTS, BUT ONCE THE SCREEN'S PACKED WITH OTHER PLAYERS AND THEIR ACCOMPANYING OBJECTS AND POWER-UPS, YOUR BRAIN STARTS TO MELT. VERY CLEVER AND INTERESTING, BUT NOT EXACTLY A PLAYSTATION CLASSIC.



FLASH! AHH!

The flash of coloured light you can see streaking across the screen is the result of a crystal being put into a reactor. If, for instance, the blue player puts the crystal into his own blue reactor, a blue streak will zip to his own counter and add some valuable seconds. If, however, the blue player puts a crystal into a red reactor, off zips a red streak to steal some of the red player's time. Crackers! So, do you attempt to knacker your opponents, or just look after number one? Hmm...





STEVE COMMENT

I CAN'T FAULT ACTIVISION FOR TRYING TO COME UP WITH A NEW SORT OF GAME, BUT DUE TO THE SMALL PLAYERS. IT MEANS THAT THE MULTI PLAYER OPTION SUFFERS A BIT. PLAY IT ON YOUR OWN FOR A WHILE AND IT MAY PROVE ENJOYABLE, BUT OTHERWISE MORE OF A NOVELTY TITLE. STILL A GOOD EFFORT THOUGH.

OVERALL

LOTS OF FUN, BUT OFTEN JUST TOO DAMN MAD AS A MULTI-PLAYER GAME. STILL, VERY ORIGINAL AND CERTAINLY NOT A STINKER IN ANYONE'S BOOKS. A STRANGE FRUIT...

ALTERNATIVES

THERE'S NOTHING REALLY LIKE IT. AND THAT'S A GOOD THING IN MY BOOKS!

75 SOUNDS

78 ANIMATION

72 GRAPHICS

79 PLAYABILITY

79

REVIEW

TOSHI KIDS

Not content with being out-done by pretty much every polygon beat-'em-up to have appeared since the original Toshinden, Takara feel it's time for further humiliation... with children. Ha ha. How funny!

Dear, oh dear, oh dear. PLEASE don't let us get into this stupid 'Kids' thing in the UK. We had Vitua Fighter Kids on the Saturn (and wasn't that worth the effort!) and now we have Toshinden Kids. And who, I wonder, might be interested in this concept? Simple: anyone who likes wasting money on sub-standard spin-off products, of course. But whatever next? 'Command and Conquer Kids'? "You control gangs of kids wandering round a playground stealing dinner money and nicking marbles." Hmm. Or perhaps 'WipEout Kids' where you have to slide down the stairs in your nappy. Or even 'Destruction Derby Kids' where you (in the guise of an eight year old, hyperactive on orange juice) steal your dad's keys and take his Mercedes for a spin round the Sainsbury car park. The possibilities are endless. Unfortunately (and this is the killer) the fun isn't...

BLOODY KIDS!

Fans of Toshinden (er, any in tonight?) will no doubt be extraordinarily 'pleased' to know that all the great characters from the series have been bastardised for their appearance in the hilarious 'Kids' version. Attempt now — if you can — to contain yourself while we visit their younger selves.

RIKA

Rika (ka-ka-ka-ka-ka!) is a pretty uninspired character, with very basic moves involving her huge hammer. Loads of spinning and bashes abound, along with a small kick and a special move that's, yes, you've guessed, a huge hammer swing. What a revoltin' development!

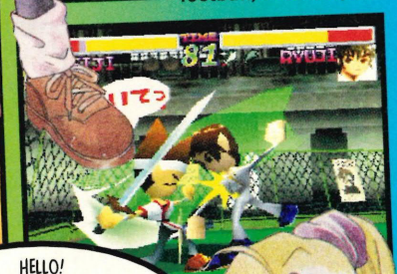
BOK! It's hammer-time (and yes, I know that was an obvious caption). So sue me!

EIJI

It'll probably come as no surprise to find that the distorted version of Eiji relies on his rubber sword for most attacks. He can also slide in to knock opponents down, and has a special attack that launches a partially unwrapped mini-cheese. Or something.

RYUJI

He's a nineteen fifties conman! Well no he isn't, but he has a suit AND a sword that works in slow-motion (like that makes sense!) Anyway, as well as tons of sword-inspired attacks, Ryuji has a cracking special attack. From outta nowhere he finds a football, lines it up, and takes a penalty. GOAL!

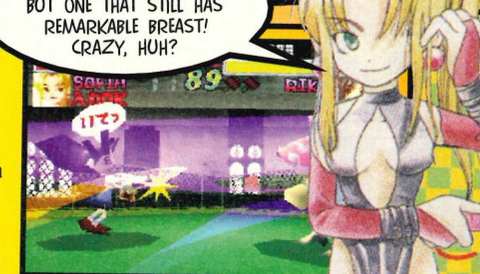


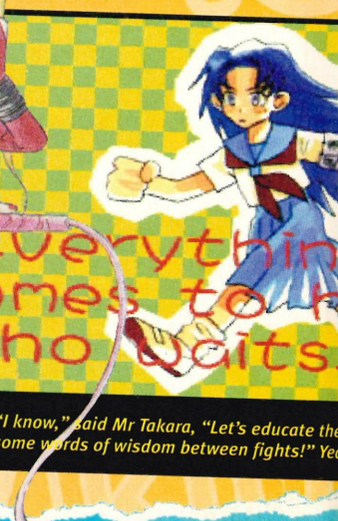
SHU

Shu relies on his ability to summon mystic forces to his aid; commanding what looks to me like an enormous kelly doll. This 'thing' bounces, drops and thrusts into your opponent, while a more traditional strike and spin augments his 'normal' moves. Cool.

SOFIA

Sofia is one of the few characters that does actually fight like her original, fully-formed counterpart. She has a couple of standard whip attacks, a spinning pirouette , a defensive spin, and a Marshall Law-esque somersault kick. She also has jelly-like bosoms that, er... jiggle around. Blimey!





"I know," said Mr Takara, "Let's educate the some words of wisdom between fights!" Ye

NDEN

BY: TAKARA OUT: NOW (JAPAN) PRICE: £IMPORT

TRACY

Madame batons is all spinning sticks and stuff, along with a sliding kick attack of the Bison/Vega school. Her special attack is a curiously warping move that sees her perform a mid-air spin and then stretch out, feet-first into the opponent. Crazy gal or what? I ask ya.

BAIFU

Apart from having tattoos all over his body, Baifu is interesting as he has a large pointy stick. This stick swings, thrusts and generally pokes your opponent, while his hideously swollen foot also enters the fray on occasion. And today's special... a huge spiky spinning attack thing! Rock.

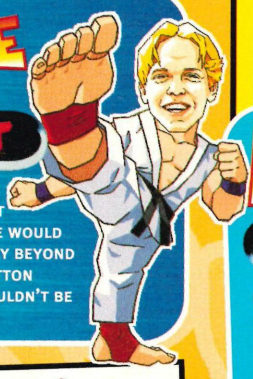
ELLIS

Ellis is probably one of the more varied fighters in Tosh' Kids, sporting the obvious spins and such, but with the addition of a double-foot spring and magical special attacks. And that, ladies and germs, concludes our tour. We hope you've enjoyed this waste of time. Oh yes... DON'T BUY THIS!

One good thing to mention about Toshinden Kids is that it, once again, shows off how clever the PlayStation is at transparencies.

STEVE COMMENT

WHAT A PILE OF STEAMING, FESTERING DOG TURD AND THAT'S NOT BEING FAIR TO THE POO. WHY ANYONE WOULD CONSIDER BUYING THIS IS COMPLETELY BEYOND ME. GO OUT AND GET YOUR BELLY BUTTON PIERCED INSTEAD. AT LEAST THAT WOULDN'T BE AS PAINFUL AS PLAYING THIS. PLOP.



MATT COMMENT

IF THIS WAS — LIKE THE 'BIG HEADS' IN TEKKEN 2 — A SPECIAL HIDDEN MODE, I'D PROBABLY LOOK AT IT ONCE, CHUCKLE FOR A MINUTE OR TWO, AND THEN MOVE ON, NEVER TO RETURN. HOWEVER, THIS IS A FULL-PRICED GAME, AND NOTHING MORE THAN A NOVELTY. PERHAPS SOME WEIRD JAPANESE KID MIGHT THINK THIS IS GREAT, BUT EXPERIENCE SUGGESTS THAT MOST UK PUNTERS WILL CONSIDER THIS AN INSULT. ANYTHING THAT MADE THE ORIGINAL TOSHINDEN GAMES WORTH PLAYING HAS BEEN REMOVED, LEAVING A 'NOT-EVEN-FUNNY JOKE PRODUCT' PRODUCT. AVOID THIS LIKE, WELL... LIKE A CRAP GAME REALLY.

OVERALL

PLOP! IGNORE THE INDIVIDUAL MARKS, IT'S THE OVERALL YOU WANT TO PAY ATTENTION TO. AND IT'S POO. CONSIDERING TOSH' PALED IN COMPARISON TO TEKKEN, TOBAL, ET ALL, THERE'S NO REASON FOR THIS TO EVEN EXIST.

ALTERNATIVES

TOSHINDEN 2, TEKKEN, TOBAL NO.1

30 SOUNDS	80 ANIMATION
81 GRAPHICS	20 PLAYABILITY

23

CHEATS

If you're reading this before Crimbo, then there's only a few more days to go! If you're reading it afterwards, then we hope you had a lovely time playing all your new games. Either way, you should still have loads of tips for us in the next few weeks, so send 'em in for prizes. Got that pal?

TOMB RAIDER

WEAPONS CHEAT

What can we say about this game? Frankly it's one of the best titles of the year and if the sales are anything to go by, you lot think so too! But it's tough. So let the good tips doctors at Mean Machines give you a cure for your frustrations. Oh, and don't phone in if it doesn't work, as we didn't have a game to test it on. D'oh! While playing, go to the inventory screen, and press Look (L1), Draw Weapon (Triangle), Step Right (R2), Step Left (L2), Step Left (L2), Step Right (R2), Roll (Circle), Look (L1). This will give you all of the weapons fully loaded, and can be repeated as many times as you wish. The button presses here are assuming you have the controls in the default mode, so if you change them, use your new buttons for the cheats.

JOHN MADDEN '97

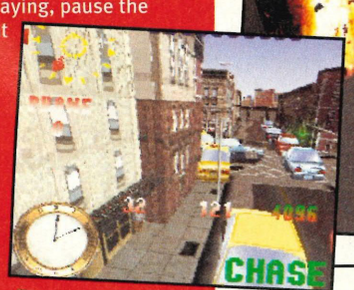
HIDDEN TEAM

Quite a surprise title this one. While Fifa has been getting all the hype and publicity, NHL and Madden '97 have slipped in the back door. Compare all three and it's ironic the worst also happens to be EA's latest football sim! Anyway, for those who have been wise enough to purchase this one instead of Soccer, here's a cheat to access a hidden team: Go to the Exhibition screen and press L2 and R2 until a hidden team appears!

TIME COMMANDO

EXTRA CONTINUES

Okay, Okay. We know now. The codes that were printed in the issue a couple of months back didn't work. And there are two possible reasons for that. One is that they're for the American version and the other is that we didn't have time to test them out. To try and rectify this, we have a code to give you three extra continues. While playing, pause the game, and highlight "Sound FX." Press Triangle, Square, Circle, X, Triangle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Square and Triangle. Hopefully that should work.



DIE HARD TRILOGY

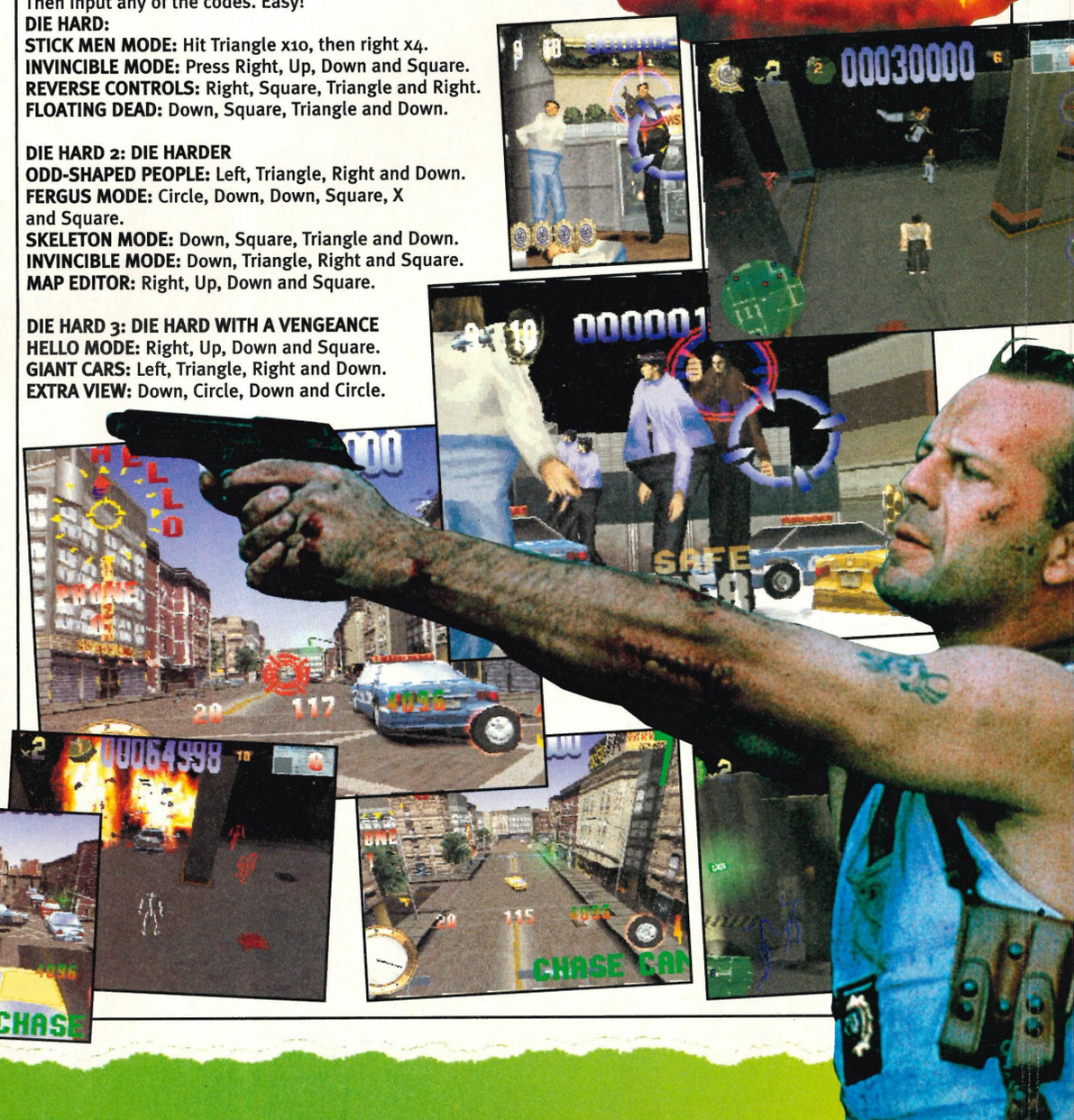
PASSWORDS AND CODES

Dah dah dada dah dah dahhhhhh! Roll out the red carpet, as we present the winner of Tip of the Month! Mr. Dean Ratcliffe can expect a game of the month very soon for his efforts. And what a fine bunch of cheats they are. Loads of stuff for all the games on Die Hard are here, and with the game having only just been released, check this little lot out! To make all of these cheats work, all you have to do is start the relevant game, pause it and hold R2. Then input any of the codes. Easy!

DIE HARD:
STICK MEN MODE: Hit Triangle x10, then right x4.
INVINCIBLE MODE: Press Right, Up, Down and Square.
REVERSE CONTROLS: Right, Square, Triangle and Right.
FLOATING DEAD: Down, Square, Triangle and Down.

DIE HARD 2: DIE HARDER
ODD-SHAPED PEOPLE: Left, Triangle, Right and Down.
FERGUS MODE: Circle, Down, Down, Square, X and Square.
SKELETON MODE: Down, Square, Triangle and Down.
INVINCIBLE MODE: Down, Triangle, Right and Square.
MAP EDITOR: Right, Up, Down and Square.

DIE HARD 3: DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE
HELLO MODE: Right, Up, Down and Square.
GIANT CARS: Left, Triangle, Right and Down.
EXTRA VIEW: Down, Circle, Down and Circle.



STAR GLADIATOR EPISODE:I FINAL CRUSADE

STAR GLADIATOR

DARK MODE

Capcom's first venture into the world of 3D beat-'em-ups should have hit the shelves of your local games shop by now, and no doubt you'll be snapping it up. Once the game is completed in Normal Mode, check to the Options screen for a Wall Mode which prevents fighters from falling out of the ring. But, for a better little cheat, start a game and once on the character select screen, press and hold L2, R2 and Down. Keep them held once your fighter has been selected, and when the game loads, you should find the fight is being played completely in the dark! Now you can really see those cool lighting effects! And how do you fancy being able to play as three secret characters? And how about some moves for two of them? Say no more!

BILSTEIN

Enter Arcade Mode, and while holding Select, move to Gore and press G, K, G, K, A, A, A, B, B, B, G + K

f+A	Downward arc chop
f+B	Mid Slice
f+K	Ankle Kick (knock-down)
b+B	Mid-slice (opponent turns round if hit)
b+K	Invisibility... but not his sword! (last roughly 5 seconds)
d,df,f+A	Advancing chop (faster than f+A)
charge b,f+B	Side-spin left slice
df+A	Charging stab (knockdown)
df+B	Side-spin right slice
df+K	Slide kick
db+A	Up thrust
G+K	Float : While floating, the joystick will move forward and backwards.
Hold	G to rotate. K to drop to ground. A or B to attack downwards (and drop to the ground)
Most Damaging set combo	A, A, B, K, K, up+A (132 damage points)

KAPPAH

Enter Arcade Mode, move to Gore, hold Select, move to Hayato, and press K, A, B, A, G, A, B, A, K, A, G + B

f+A	Low lunge
f+B	Low Slash
f+K	High Kick
b+A	Jump up, slash down
b+B	Side slash (opponent turns around if hit)
d,df,f+A,K	High lunge, jumping knee
f,df,d,db,b+	Multi thrust attack (keep tapping A for more hits)
f,df,d,db,b+B	Hop forward, twirl weapon in front (around 5-6 hits)
f,df,d,db,b+K	Double somersault kick
df+A	Low hit
df+B	Low slice (Knockdown)
df+K,b+K	Low Roundhouse sweep, spin kick juggle
Charge b,f+K+G	Side roll (no hit)
Charge f,b+K:	Opponent must be lying face down on floor
Most Damaging Combo:	A, A, A, K, A, A (147 damage points)

BLOOD

Enter Arcade Mode, and while holding Select, move to Bilstein, press G, A, G, A, G, A, go to Kappah, press K, B, K, B, K, B, hold in L1 and R1, and let go of Select.

SOVIET STRIKE

PASSWORDS

Since its release a few weeks ago now, we've have had quite a few of you calling up wanting to know the passcodes for this. It was lucky for those in question that we did. So, if anyone else is having a bit of trouble, then I suggest you have a gander at these codes to save your phone bills!

LEVEL 2: GRANDTHEFT
LEVEL 3: GROZNEY
LEVEL 4: CHERNOBYL
LEVEL 5: CIVILWAR

CHEATS

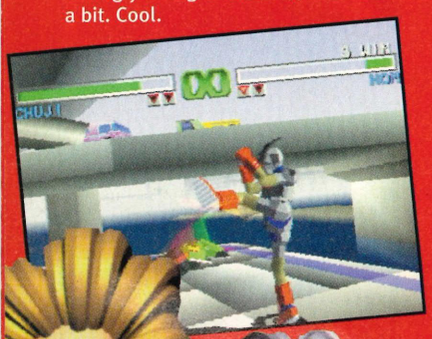
HMV

TOBAL NO. 1

COLOUR CHANGE, MOVING CAMERA

Although not out officially yet, it has been available on import for quite a while now, so we thought we'd give you a little snippet of tipping greatness for you to have a peek at. Firstly, we have a simple, but neat way, to get the extra costume up for each of the characters. All you have to do is hold Up when selecting a character to play in their alternate colours.

Also on the Character Select screen, hold L2 & R2 when choosing a fighter to have a new "moving camera" view during your fight which er, moves about a bit. Cool.



WIPEOUT 2097

RACE WITH ANIMALS

From the sublime to the ridiculous! Last month we exposed how to access the Piranha and the awesome mini-gun, and we follow that up this month with 'how to race as a snail.' Right, okay then. Perhaps we'd just better get on with the tips. As soon as you switch on the machine, press and hold R2 + L1 + Select and Start. Now keep them held down until the demo starts to roll. If you've done that correctly, then you should find the craft in the demo being piloted by animals! Coolio or what?

BLAZING DRAGONS

PASSWORDS

Don't ask me where he got these codes from, 'cos the game wasn't even officially released when they arrived at the MMPlayStation tips headquarters. But as long as Mark Coveney wants to send stuff in, we'll print (most of) them! So here we go with some passwords for this average 'comedy' – we use the term lightly – game.

TM72Y3 L5QZ2Z WCW3OA:	KITCHEN 3%
U6KK76 V!B4QM OCW4XA:	LAKE 12%
EQ2YYF AZP4MP YEQVNA:	ENCHANTED MAP 21%
23W7ZE ZJZVW! XD7DOA:	TOURNAMENT GROUNDS 24%
U!BK77 WK2FD3 M!74XA:	UPSTAIRS HALLWAY 39%
MM3JC7 HALB7P AU6PVA:	CASTLE ENTRY 47%
JYULY2 VNOVN5 NCB6WB:	CASTLE GRIM 67%
NLQT?3 4L%T6R !2L5QA:	MERVIN'S LAB 72%
QLY5MZ MAKODD MMPJFA:	BENEATH STONEHENGE 82%
%KYE2T NTLZXP YEB!QA:	CAVE OF DILEMMAS 87%
ZOKXNU L5XZ3Y O3%A?A:	TOURNAMENT ENTRANCE 92%
32!JUN4 4!NH7Q TRT4FA:	CAT-A-PULT 95%
VFV5MK 5N6LVL OHW5CB:	BLACK DRAGON'S BOWELS 97%

MEAN TIP OF THE MONTH!

Well done to Dean Ratcliffe for winning this month's top tip prize. We know you wanted Crash Bandicoot, but let us know if that's still the case! You could be owning a free disc if your tips are good enough which'll give you another good reason to celebrate Crimbo! Send your cheats to: DO I NOT LIKE LATE NIGHTS, Bags Under The Eyes Department, Mean Machines PlayStation, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

IRON & BLOOD

warriors of Ravenloft

THE DARK SIDE OF 3-D FIGHTING!

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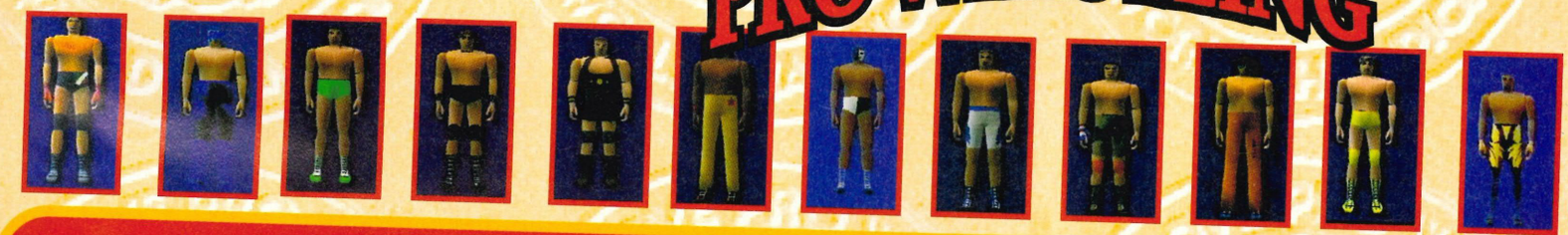
REVIEW

Oh! Get yer 'and outta' me arse! The doctor said I wouldn't need another one of these if I took the tablets!

Fat men! Fat men with beards!! Fat men with beards wearing leotards!!! Enough, I'm sure, to make the hair on the backs of any man's neck stand up. Scary, and sweaty... and all at once. Just like Giant Haystacks!

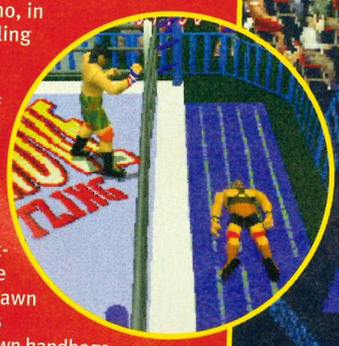
POWER MOVE PRO WRESTLING

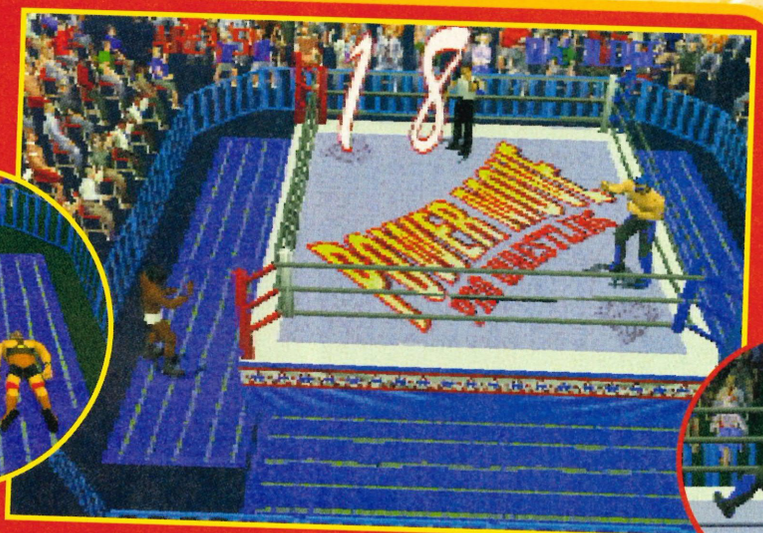
I originally planned to use this intro to reminisce about the 'good-old-days' when Saturday afternoons were filled with fat old men in leotards acting out staged 'fights' while old women got very upset and angry, leaving Dickie Davis to comb that silly streak of grey that took over his fringe. Sadly, though, I realised that probably very few of our readers would actually be old enough to know what I'd be talking about, and if truth be known, Saturday afternoon means Airwolf and open-forum discussion programmes where 'youths' talk about spots and 'funny feelings' inside. Well, frankly, sod you then. I shall go home and talk to someone old (ie over twenty) and leave you to play Activision's second title this month — Power Move Pro Wrestling. I didn't like you anyway!



RING OUT!

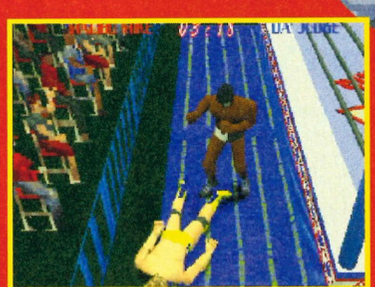
Not the sort of 'Ring Outs' that we've come to know and love from the likes of fighting games such as Virtua Fighter, Criticom, Star Gladiator and Zero Divide. Oh no, in Power Pro Wrestling you get to jump, crawl and throw opponents out of the ring for some front-row action. Heads crack on railings, backs get broken, and all thanks to fighters flying from the ring, and badly drawn 'CEEFAX' grannies grasping badly drawn handbags.





It's no use holding on to the ropes. You're outta' here, and you know it!

To infinity and beyond! The mighty Brian Pants takes to air, with hilarious results.

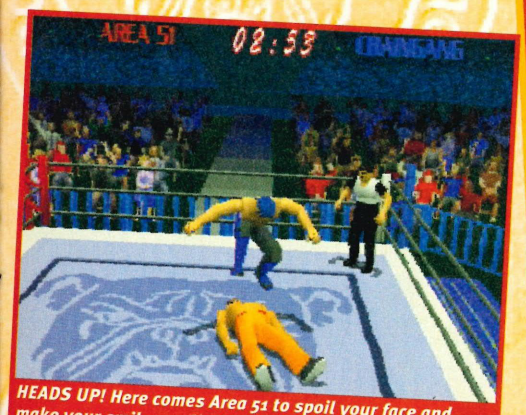


Hmm. So you're unconscious and helpless? Great. What to break first...?

BY: ACTIVISION OUT: DECEMBER PRICE: £44.95

OUCH! NOW THAT'S GOTTA' HURT!

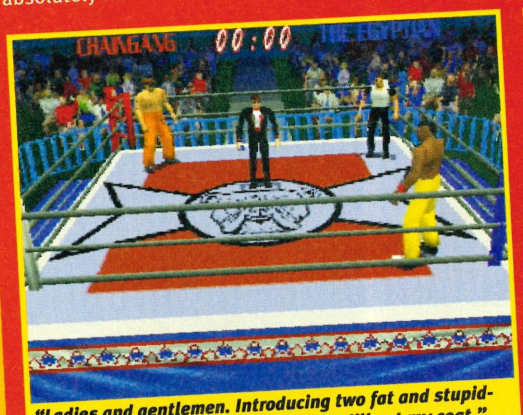
Hardcore, you know the score. Sound as a pound. Sweet as a nut. Blah blah blah. Etc. etc. Come on gang, just look at the bloody pictures and stop expecting me to say interesting things!



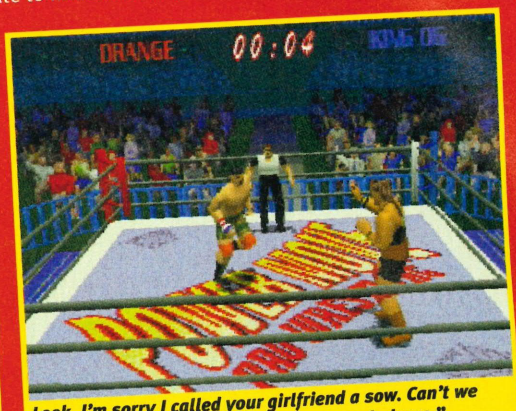
HEADS UP! Here comes Area 51 to spoil your face and make your smile go all the way round your head. Plop.

RINGS AROUND URANUS!

There are four different rings to fight in, and four different venues to visit in Power Move Pro Wrestling. Venues: Dome, Vito's, Crock, and Slam Rock all have slightly different graphical back drops, while the four ring types equate to little more than a different canvas illustration. So, what I'm saying here is that these options make absolutely no odds to the game, but I was pretty desperate to find something to talk about!

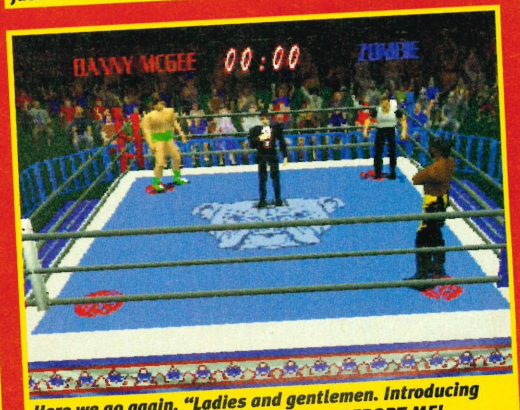


"Ladies and gentlemen. Introducing two fat and stupid-looking men. And if you'll excuse me, I'll get my coat."

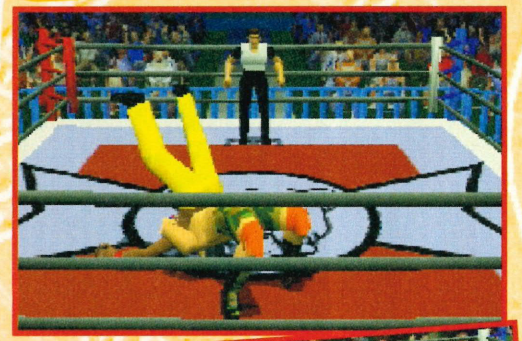


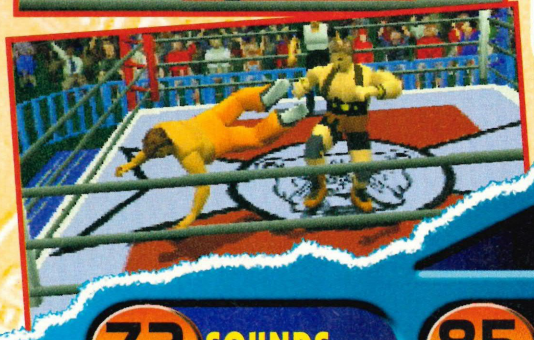
Look. I'm sorry I called your girlfriend a sow. Can't we just talk about this like two grown men. In lycra."

Ow! Oh! Ouch! You're pulling my hair you bitch! I thought we said no nails, and look — you're all manicured!



Here we go again. "Ladies and gentlemen. Introducing blah blah blah." Yeah, so I'm boring. REPORT ME!

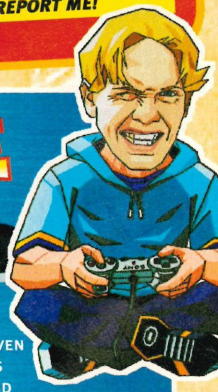




MATT COMMENT

Having reviewed the original Japanese version of Power Move some months before MMP even existed, I was no stranger to the game. It remains a fun and light-hearted offering, relying more on japes and vicious animations that any real skill or move-memorising, but doesn't really offer a huge amount of lasting appeal for a lone, single player. Like WWF Wrestlemania, the real fun is to be had with a second human opponent, but it's certainly fun just playing through the different characters and finding their various moves. Power Move remains nothing particularly spectacular, but fun enough and quite attractive.

STEVE COMMENT



It must be said that Activision are brave for attempting a wrestling game without a WWF license, but even so they have created a game that is fun to play, if a little rough around the edges. It looks nice enough, and some of the moves are amusing to watch, but overall, you can't help feeling Wrestlemania is better.

OVERALL

Not good enough to get into the eighty percent area, but good fun and well presented. Get your leotard outta that cupboard and take it to the floor!

ALTERNATIVES
WWF Wrestlemania.
Tekken 2. Star Gladiator.

72 SOUNDS
85 ANIMATION
82 GRAPHICS
84 PLAYABILITY

79

REVIEW

PLAY Manag

Time to get yer dad's seventies Winter coat out 'cos a life of footy manager is swinging towards the near post! Join us in the boot room for a team talk, but make sure you tuck your shorts in 'cos the boss is a bit of a disciplinarian!

Soccer managers don't you just love 'em! Literally everyday they're splattered all over the paper. And if it's not a sacking or a transfer deal that's landed 'em in The Bun, then it's woeful tales of theft, backhanders, kirbs that have been crawled down, game rigging and hotel nights with naughty ladies! Thus far our lovely Sony machine hasn't had a sniff of this type of lifestyle – unless you include On-Side Soccer which had an element of management to it. But now, courtesy of Anco, you can enjoy the cut the thrust of of both playing and managing yer own footy team. Right, last one in the showers smells of wee!

HOUSE OF PAIN?

Hi, Des here... again! Join me as I take you on a behind the scenes jaunt around a professional football club. And you'll find out, exactly how they do that. Oh no that's not me any more, it's that jolly Irish fellow. And that new bird.

MONEY MONEY MONEY

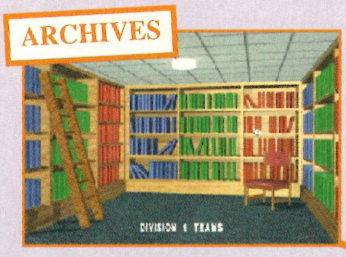
Here in the accounts department your leather-clad manager can organise ground improvements (like slicking in new floodlights) check all the club's finances, and even take the squad on a jolly holiday. St. Tropez here we come!

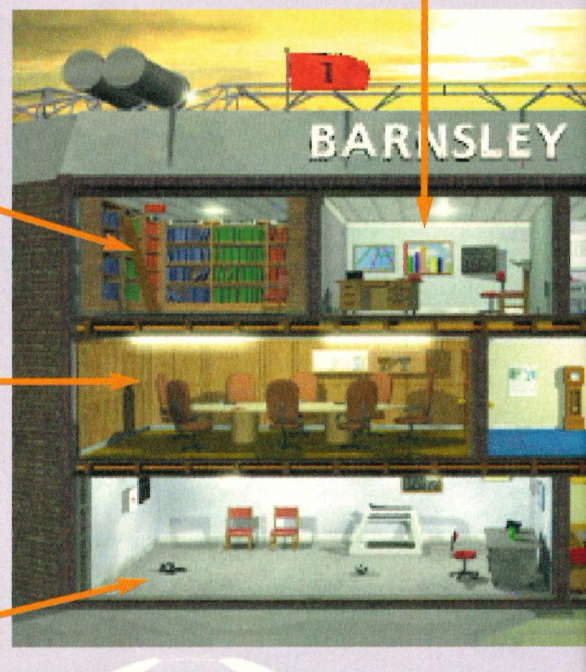
FINANCE

YOU'RE HISTORY

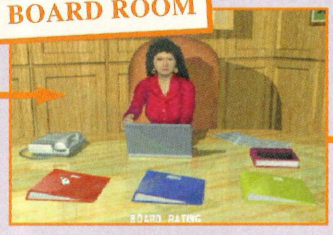
Motty's dream place to meet Statto! This library style room allows Mr. Manager to flick through all the results, stats and history of every domestic league and cup known to football.

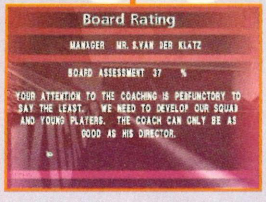
ARCHIVES





BOARD ROOM

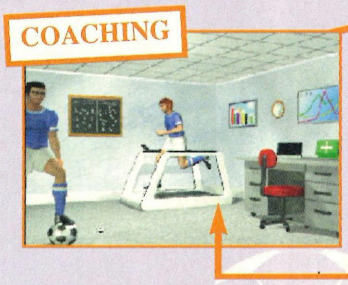




PAY THE PIPER

A place where many managers tend to poo their pants 'cos this is the room where you get your cards. Likewise if you've been a good leader, then the board give you a pat on the back and pay you pots of cash!

COACHING



GET PHYSICAL

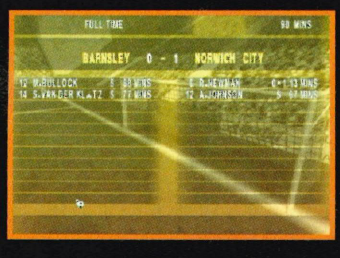
We've arrived in the sweat house of the modern footy side. This is the gaff where you'll organise the team's formation, their tactics, style of play and even jump in the tub and have a bath after the game! Oo-er.

THREE DELIGHTFUL VIEWS TO CHOOSE!

Soccer management sims have never been the most graphically stunning games on the planet, relying instead on people's (or sad asses depending what side of the fence you sit on) fascination with statistical analysis. Well, Anco's Ron-Atkinson-'em-up, at least lets you view the 'action' in three different ways. Let's grab a meat pie and a mug of Bovril and make our way to the crappest seats in the house that are completely obscured by stanchions! Excellent.

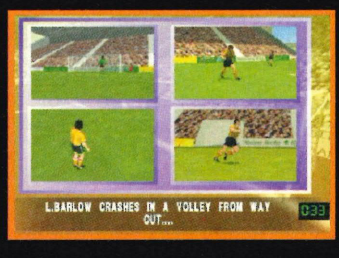
CRYSTAL BALL

Not exactly a 'crystal ball' because that wouldn't be very realistic at all, although if you could have one it'd be damn handy for the Pools. Shame. But this simply takes you to the final score of the game.



HIGHLIGHTS

This interesting and novel way to display the game uses animation snippets to show the best efforts, major incidents and, if you're lucky, goals of the game. Enjoyable, but it might get slightly tedious before too long!

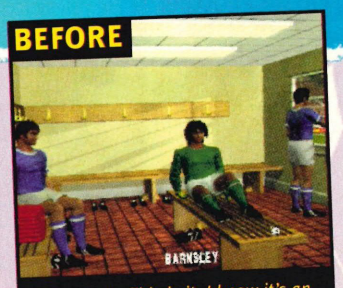


FAST SCANNER

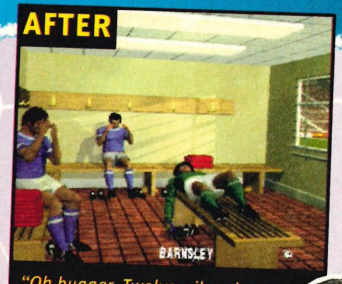
This scanner allows you to get a much stronger idea of whether your tactics are working, as you can see the shape of the game as it progresses and make the necessary changes. Turnip Taylor times ahoy!

BY: ANCO OUT: DECEMBER PRICE: £49.99

ER
er



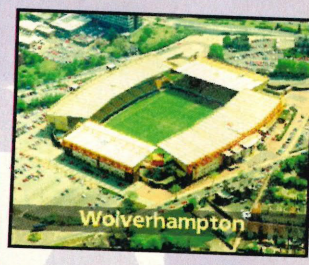
"Okay lads. This is it. I know it's an away match to Liverpool, but we've trained hard and I know you'll deliver the performance we want!"



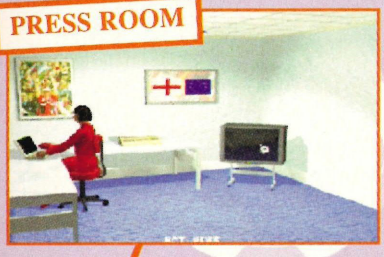
"Oh bugger. Twelve-nil and not a point in sight. I think I'll see if that hospital is still looking for limb donors. Plop."

SIMON COMMENT

OBVIOUSLY THIS ISN'T A GAME THAT THE "FOOTY'S BORING, LET'S GO MORRIS DANCING" BRIGADE WILL SALIVATE OVER. IF, HOWEVER, YOU'RE INTO FOOTBALL, LOVE STATISTICS AND ENJOY LIMITED VISUALS, THIS IS ADEQUATE FAIR. WHILE THERE'S NO REFLEX GAMING INVOLVED, I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT I ENJOYED PUTTING MY SIDE THROUGH THEIR PACES. AS THIS IS THE FIRST 'REAL' MANAGEMENT SIM FOR THE 'STATION I'D SAY IT'S WORTH A LOOK AT. HOWEVER, WHEN COMPARED TO THE FOOTY SIMS WE'VE SEEN IN THE PAST ON THE PC, PLAYER MANAGER GETS RELEGATED TO THE LOWER DIVISIONS. STILL, PRETTY GOOD STUFF.

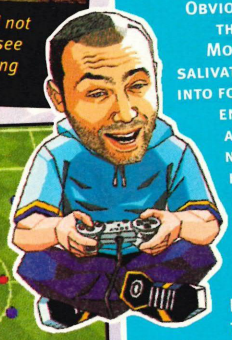


PRESS ROOM

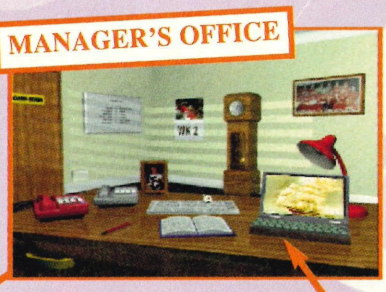


MEET THE PUBLIC

First stop is the Press Room where you can turn on the telly and check out whether you've made the headlines, or just keep up with current footy events. You can also check out the internationals, take a glance at the year's champions and relegated teams, and also have a chat with the secretary.

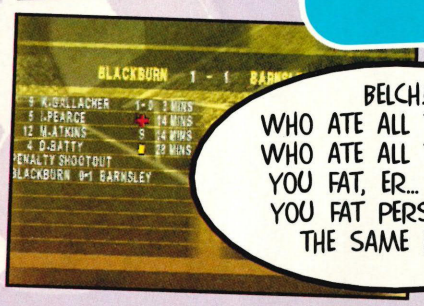


MANAGER'S OFFICE

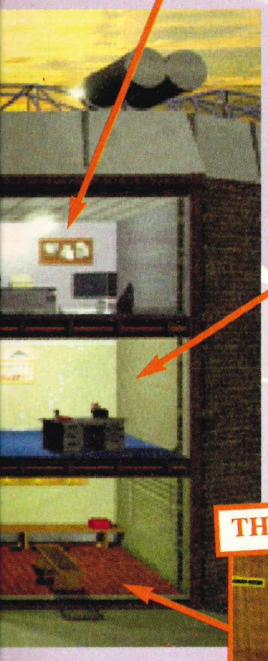


BE THE BOSS

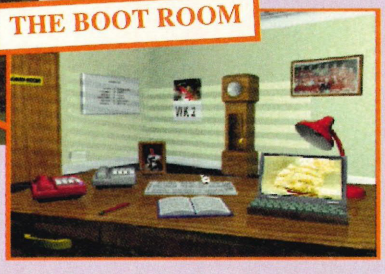
Your sanctuary and a place to hide – especially when you've been beaten 5-0 by Stafford Rangers! Here you can review your squad, send the coach on player finding missions and get on the blower in the search of new blood. Dodgy backhanders ahoy!



BELCH! WHO ATE ALL THE PIES? WHO ATE ALL THE PIES? YOU FAT, ER... PERSON, YOU FAT PERSON. NOT THE SAME IS IT?

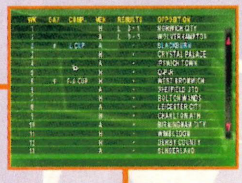


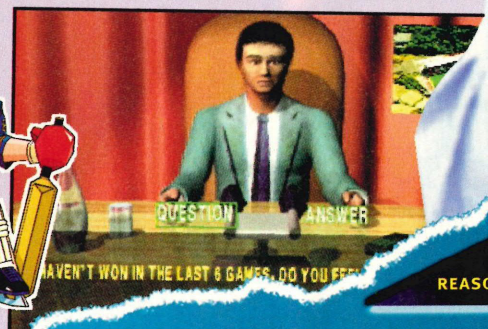
THE BOOT ROOM



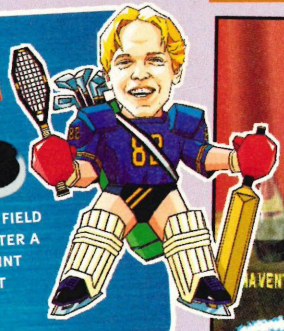
SMELLY SOCKS AHOY!

This is virtually yer last chance to make changes or back out of any particular tactic you may have chosen to employ. You also get the chance to look out the window and discover that there's only two old blokes, a stray dog and a Brownie troop come to watch you. Bah!





STEVE COMMENT



BUDDING TERRY VENABLES WILL HAVE A FIELD DAY WITH THIS, BUT THOSE WHO ARE AFTER A LITTLE MORE ACTION, TRY WATCHING PAINT DRY. IT'S ALL DONE NICELY ENOUGH, BUT HAVING SEEN THE AWESOME PC MANAGEMENT GAMES, I CAN'T HELP FEELING THIS COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER. OH WELL.

OVERALL

DEFINITELY ONE FOR THE SIM LOVERS. THOSE WHO LIKE THEIR GRAPHICS FANCY AND GAMEPLAY FAST SHOULD AVOID, BUT IF YOU'RE INTO FOOTY AND MANAGEMENT, PM IS REASONABLE, AND WILL KEEP YOU OCCUPIED FOR ETERNITY.

70 SOUNDS

60 ANIMATION

70 GRAPHICS

78 PLAYABILITY

78

ALTERNATIVES

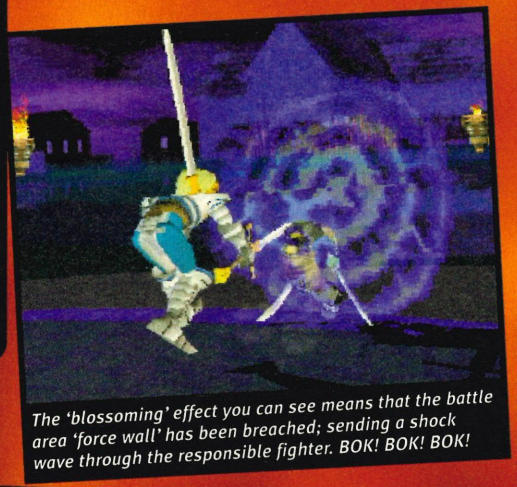
ON-SIDE SOCCER IS THE ONLY GAME WITH MANAGEMENT AT THE MO.

REVIEW

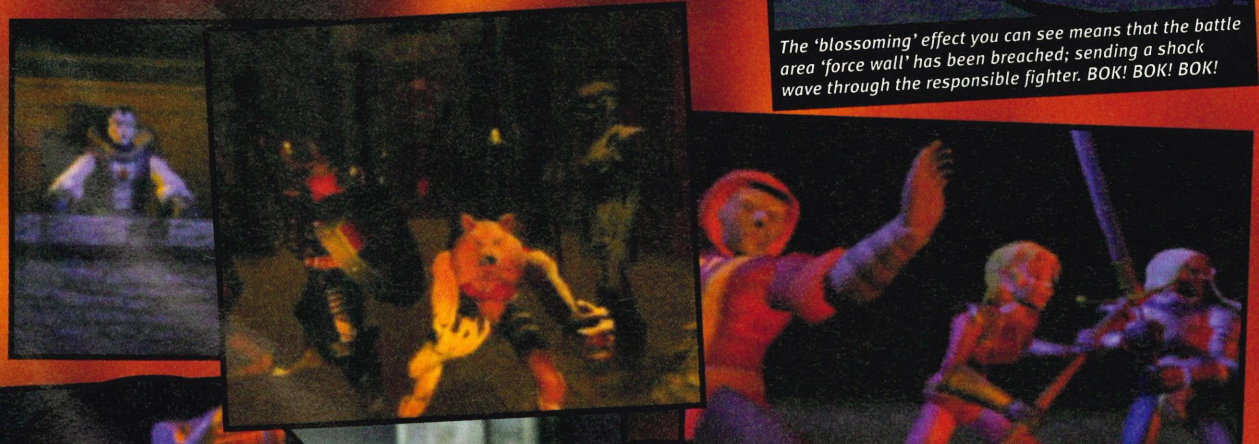
IRON & BLOOD

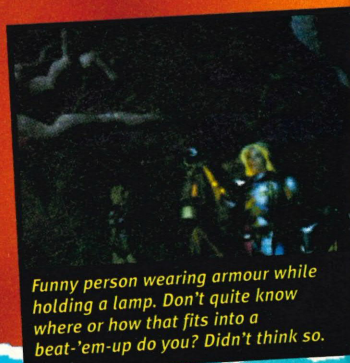
It's like, you know, a beat-'em-up-like, yeah? But it's like, well... all weird and fantasy-like, you know? I mean, like, are Acclaim just the most bonkers gang of dudes or what? Er... like pass me my, like, shield, yeah? Cool.

Though beat-'em-ups have taken about ten years to get where they are today, their evolution has some very specific key moments. First; two fighters armed with simple kicks and punches. Second; eight different kicks and punches thanks to the two button joystick. Next up; the introduction of the joypad and the facility to produce attacks of differing strength and speed, along with probably the most important inclusion to the genre — Special Moves! At about the same time some clever game bod decided that it'd be good to let you string attacks together to form combinations, and even turn attacks around once blocked, via counter moves. So what next? Well, how about all manner of fantasy creatures and characters armed with weird and wonderful weapons and scary attacks? Hmm, sounds like there's a game in there somewhere...



The 'blossoming' effect you can see means that the battle area 'force wall' has been breached; sending a shock wave through the responsible fighter. BOK! BOK! BOK!





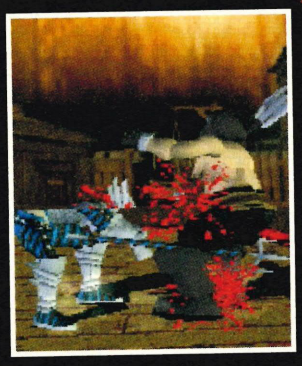
Funny person wearing armour while holding a lamp. Don't quite know where or how that fits into a beat-'em-up do you? Didn't think so.

THE SINISTER SIXTEEN!

There really would be no point in having a beat-'em-up without at least sixteen stonkingly cool characters to throw at each other, would there? And baste my steaming puddings if that isn't exactly what we've got here! The characters are split into two groups; the Forces of Order, and the Forces of Chaos. If you're playing with a team you have to select all your characters from one 'force', but other than that, it's a free for all!

DARIUS

A master of all weapons, Darius fights purely for the sheer hell of it! Though he adheres to the strict gladiators' code of honour (you know, "Contender ready?" that sort of thing) he's not past ramming his trident where the sun don't shine, so don't do your shoe laces up in the same room as him!



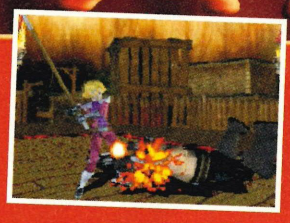
THE FORCES OF ORDER

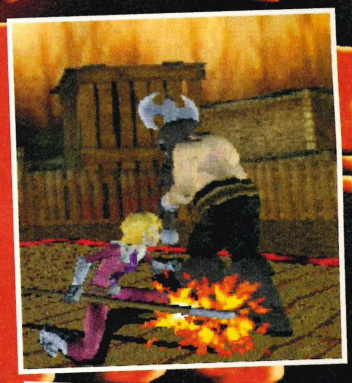
RED CLOUD

No, not flatulence with food colouring, but in fact a shaman without a tribe. Old Red Cloud's a bit of a funny fellow, making use of magic to augment his fighting style — which tends to be from a distance and heavily features his 'whacking stick' or staff.

SHINESTA

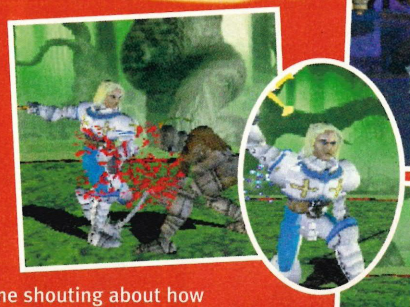
This Elven princess is deadly in the hands of a learned player as she has not only a mastery of the staff, but also a powerful range of magical attacks and spells. She can also use her staff to pole vault about. Oh yeah, and to smack you in the clackers with too!





LUTHOR

The sort of Christian like sparkly-eyed wally everyone loves to kick about, Luthor the Paladin is a REAL knight in shining armour. As well as fighting with an enormous sword, Luthor also spends a large amount of his time shouting about how righteous things are. Bonkers, or what?



IGNATIUS MAX

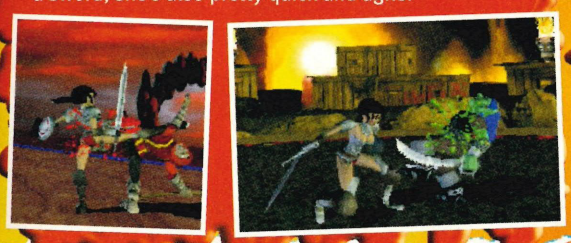
The diminutive thief is a bit tasty with ye olde daggers, and makes up for his lack of stature and strength with an unnerving speed and mischievous cunning. I'm sure it'll come as no surprise to learn that his roster of attacks includes a backstab. Little git! "Come on then shorty! What are ya' gonna' do? Bite my knees? Why I oughta...!"

ERLAND

Being a top Elven Archer, it'll come as no surprise to find that our Erland makes use of loft insulation and a coffee table during battles. Or should that be bow and arrows? Hmm. Anyway, he's pretty agile and isn't beyond whacking you in the nads should you fall over. As you do.

XENOBIA

Raised by a proud and hardy band of hillsmen, Xenobia has had to prove herself worthy as a woman warrior. Fortunately, as a teenager she managed to kill not only a huge bear in front of her tribe, but also a white dragon. And that sort of settled things! Jolly handy with a sword, she's also pretty quick and agile.



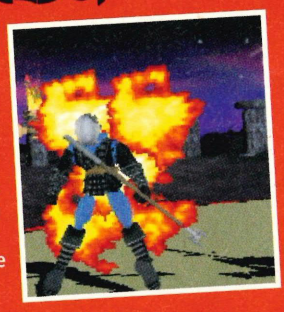
TORGO

Torgo the Dwarf is a legendary fighter, known for having lost his arm in an epic battle against the terrible ogre chieftain, Grok. He has learnt to compensate for his loss, by developing a series of deadly hammer strikes and counter strikes. With his other arm, that is.

REVIEW

THE FORCES OF CHAOS

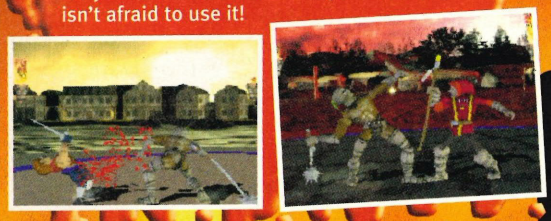
STELLEREX



And opening the batting for the good guys is Stellerex. This Merlin wannabe is the most powerful spell-caster in the game, relying more on distanced mystical attacks than a good kick to the scrotes. He is, however, prepared to get stuck in, but will keep you across the screen given half a chance.

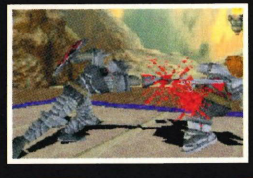
KAURIK

There's a huge involved story behind the warlord Kaurik, but the simple truth is that he's a complete and utter nutter! Dressed in a mask of human flesh, this mad man is just killing for kicks. Oh yeah, he also carries a huge mace, and isn't afraid to use it!



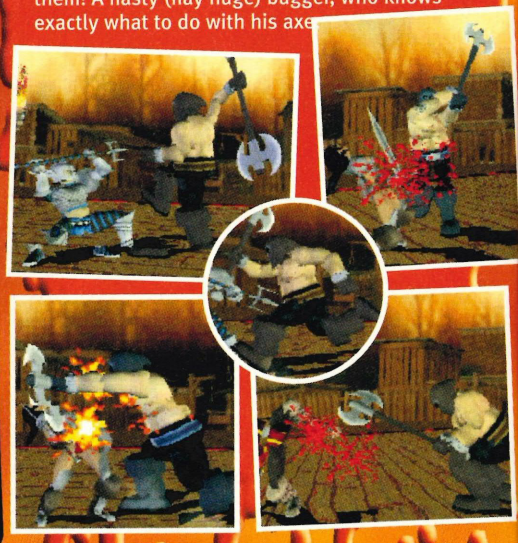
BALOCK

Apart from having the sort of name that would ensure childhood teasing, the Black Knight is cursed with the blood-lust of the vampire sword. Basically this means that he's not just in the killer game for fun, he HAS to find more blood for the blade's unquenchable thirst. I wonder if Guiness would do the trick...

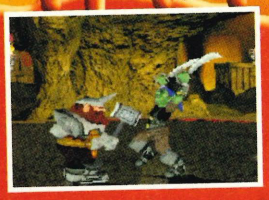


BALTHAZAAR

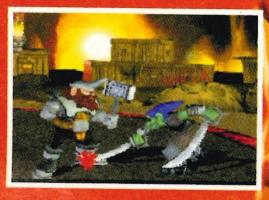
Of all the warriors, none is more infamous for his cruelty than Balthazaar the Headsman. Such a sick individual that he was dismissed from the Headman's Guild — so he killed all of them! A nasty (nay huge) bugger, who knows exactly what to do with his axe

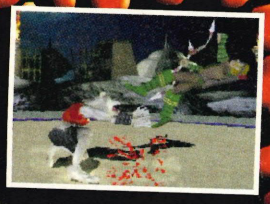


NYM PYMPLEE



Known as the "Mad Goblin", Nym has inflicted more pain with his two wicked cutlasses than Barry Manilow has with the songs he writes (which, incidentally, make the whole world cry). He also bounces around like an annoying, er... bouncy midget-thing.



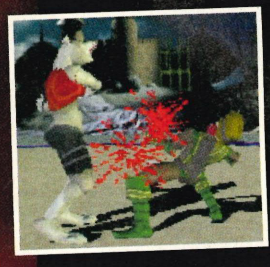


ARDRUS

Ardrus was originally captain of the guard to King Goodwyn of Aragon. Unfortunately, a plot to kill the king went (as we say) horribly wrong, and he was set upon and killed. Before his death he swore vengeance, and rose again as a skeletal warrior. Needless to say, keep Sasha away from his legs near tea-time.

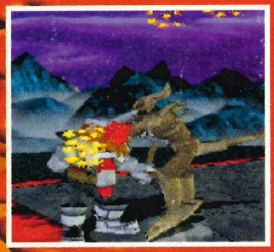
SASHA

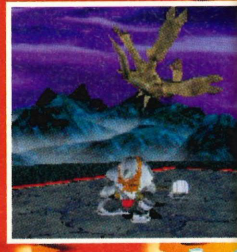
A traitorous and outcast handmaiden, cursed by a druidess to forever roam the world in a beastly form. Woof! Sasha is a fast and deadly opponent, blessed with both great speed and strength. She's also able to keep warm at night — even when there's a frost on the ground. Impressive, non?

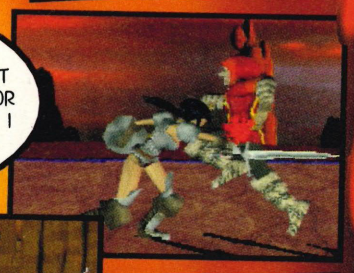


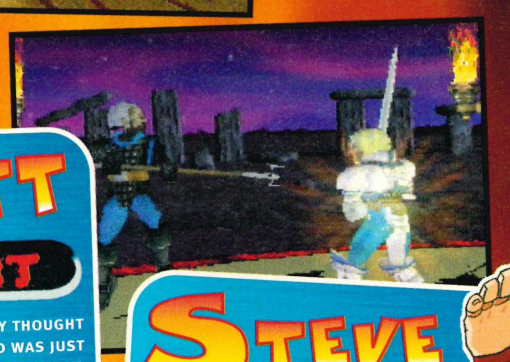
URGO

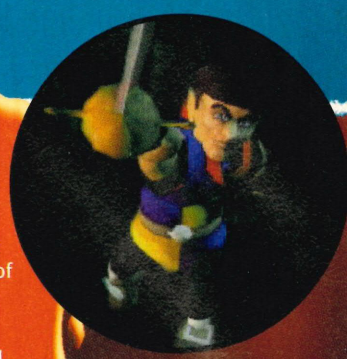
Following the bungled work of a would-be magician prince, the soul of a minor fiend called Urgo was transported into a stone gargoyle. This margoyle killed the prince and developed a healthy hatred for all things flesh. He also breaths and throws fire. Flip!

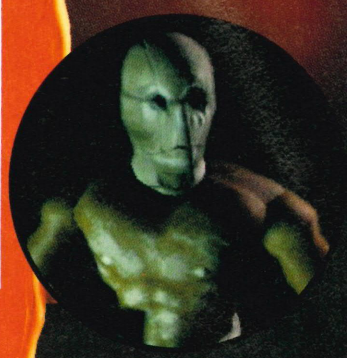


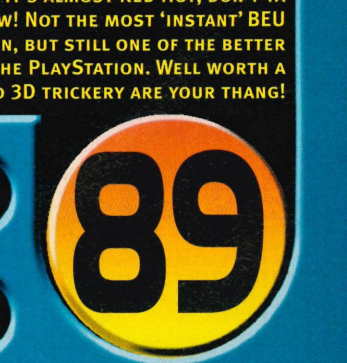












"FIGHT YOU FOR THE BRACELET!"

When playing in Campaign Mode, each fight has a reward for the victor. Often this is a magic power (that enhances that character's magical attacks) or even one of a number of special artifacts that again augment the characters' fighting.

As well as acting as the character selection menu, this screen also shows the progress of your team as far as how many magical powers and items they've collected.

Any artifacts collected can then be bestowed upon fighters before a match to help them in their quest. The artifacts are classed as being for Chaos or Order, and vary from allowing you to select your opponent, to letting you sacrifice team members for more strength.

I WROTE IN TO TFI FRIDAY'S UGLY BLOKE, BUT THEY TURNED ME AWAY FOR BEING TOO HIDEOUS! NOW I WEAR A MASK TO STOP INSULTS. TSK!

MATT COMMENT

TO BE HONEST, I INITIALLY THOUGHT THAT IRON AND BLOOD WAS JUST AN 'OKAY' BEU. FORTUNATELY, AFTER A COUPLE OF DAYS INTENSIVE TESTING I SCRATCHED DEEP ENOUGH TO FIND A PRETTY DAMN COOL GAME LURKING WITHIN! THOUGH NOT AS INSTANTLY ACCESSIBLE AS TEKKEN, WITH PATIENCE (AND SOME MOVE MEMORISING!) YOU START GETTING DRAWN IN. I'VE NO DOUBT OTHER REVIEWERS WON'T GET DEEP ENOUGH, QUICKLY ENOUGH TO SEE THE GAME WITHIN, BUT WITH A DECENT SELECTION OF CHARACTERS AND SOME GRIM MOVES, THERE'S BIG FUN TO BE HAD HERE!

STEVE COMMENT

IF WE'RE BEING COMPLETELY HONEST HERE, I DIDN'T FIND THIS QUITE AS GOOD AS MATT. DON'T GET ME WRONG, IT'S STILL A SMART GAME, BUT COMPARED TO OTHER STUFF ON THE MARKET I DIDN'T FIND IT AS ENJOYABLE. IT LOOKS NICE ENOUGH, AND HAS A WIDE RANGE OF MOVES, BUT EXECUTING TOOK TOO MUCH TIME FOR ME.

OI! STEVE YA BLEEDING GREAT SPANNER. YOU AINT GOT A CLUE WHAT YOU'RE JABBERING ON ABOUT, SO BOG ORF. MIND YOU, NEITHER HAVE I ANYWAY...

OVERALL

IT'S ALMOST RED HOT, DON'T YA KNOW! NOT THE MOST 'INSTANT' BEU WE'VE SEEN, BUT STILL ONE OF THE BETTER OFFERINGS FOR THE PLAYSTATION. WELL WORTH A LOOK IF BLOOD AND 3D TRICKERY ARE YOUR THANG!

ALTERNATIVES
CRITICOM, TEKKEN 2 OR TOBAL NO.1

90 SOUNDS	92 ANIMATION
92 GRAPHICS	89 PLAYABILITY

89

REVIEW

Floating
Quest for the 7 Crystals

Yes, can I help you? Oh, I see – yet another three dimensional platformer. Well, just take a number, get in line behind Crash and Fargus and we'll deal with as soon as we can...

I tell you, game titles are getting sillier. I mean, take this one – just what sort of image does the name 'Floating Runner' conjure up in your brain? Some idiot hovering in mid-air, his legs thrashing about in a futile attempt to get somewhere? See? It's stupid. And worse still, the title bears no relation to the game. Okay, so the heroes occasionally run but they certainly never float – at least, not in front of polite company. Mind you, if you think the game's name is crazy, what about the one they gave the hero. He's called – wait for it – Cress. I always thought that was something you put in egg and cheese sandwiches to make them taste horrible? It'll all end in tears, you know pals. Ah, well!

CHEST JEST!

Each world's stage is huge, offering lots of potential for exploration. Luckily there are little signposts to help guide you towards the crystals, but it's still worth wandering off the beaten track now and again as this is typically where you'll find chests. These caskets can be opened with a couple of well-aimed shots and contain goodies, including extra lives, health pick-me-ups and special weapons!

'Tis a cruel world that makes you jump strange boxes for eternity!

Sometimes the viewpoint in Floating Runner can be extremely frustrating and a little limiting!

LANDS A-PLENTY!

The first level is a simple warm up, at the end of which lies a giant crystal that'll transport you to one of the six worlds within Crystal Land. Every world consists of two stages, and the aim is to battle past the baddies and find the magic crystal hidden in each. When you've completed both stages, you then move on to another world.

SWAMP WORLD

Once a wondrous land of great natural beauty, Swamp World is now crawling with Saurer's slimy fiends. Even so, it's the easiest world of them all, so novice adventurers are advised to start their travels here.

FOREST WORLD

This world is full of trees, which can make navigating your way around very tricky – especially when you're being chased by a ravenous Condorer! Be prepared to do a lot of jumping between tree stumps too!

DESERT WORLD

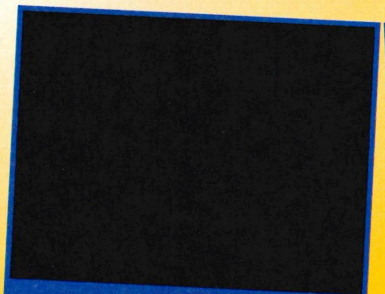
Forget about packing your trunks and bucket & spade, 'cos this world is no day at the beach! In particular look out for the scorpion-like Sasoringers scuttling about – they pack a real sting in their tails!

FIRE WORLD

Flamin' heck, it's hot in here! Mind you, what do you expect with all that lava bubbling away below you! There are many tricky jumps to be made here, and one wrong foot will send you straight into the molten rock! Youch! My botty's on fire!

WATER WORLD

Thankfully nothing to do with the tragic Kevin Costner movie, this is a gorgeous land of glistening waterfalls and majestic fountains. Don't spend too much time on the old sight-seeing though – there are baddies about!



SKY WORLD

How bizarre can things get? This world is made up of tiny islands floating in the aether, all of which are connected by magical sparkling slidechutes. Careful you don't fall off the edges and plummit into infinity!

DARK WORLD

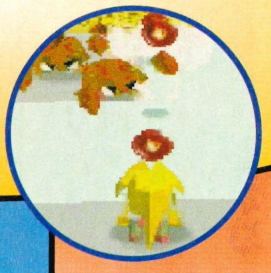
Only when you've completed all the stages in every other world can you come to Saurer's deadly domain. Here you'll face you toughest challenges yet, and a final fateful battle with the evil villain himself!

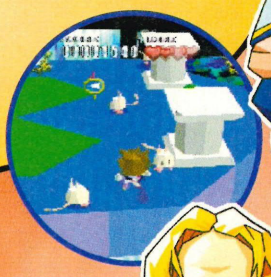
BY: THQ OUT: NOW PRICE: £44.99

Floating Runner

TO ME, MY SWORD!

Cress and Lay begin the game armed with a simple shooter that's about as much use a one-armed man in a clapping contest. Luckily extra weapons can be found hidden here and there, ranging from bombs and boomerangs, through staffs that shoot fireballs and ice-blasts, to magical shields that float about and protect the hero from harm. There is a price to the power, though – gems. These valuable rocks are left behind by slain nasties and can be collected. However, each time you fire a special weapon you lose gems, so use 'em wisely!





If... I... can... just... reach... the... ledge. Oh, I give in. I think I'll watch Oh, Dr. Beeching instead!

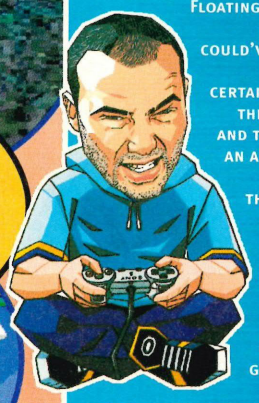
CRYSTAL QUEST!

Gather close, my children, for I have a sad tale to tell. A tale of a beautiful place called Crystal Land that has gone to wrack and ruin. Who has caused this misery, my little ones? Why, step forward Saurer, the ruler of Chaos, a foul villain who has stolen the six magical crystals which protect the Land and keep its people happy. Now the Land needs a hero, a brave fighter who will venture forth into the wilderness and reclaim the valuable gems.

CHOOSE YOUR HERO!

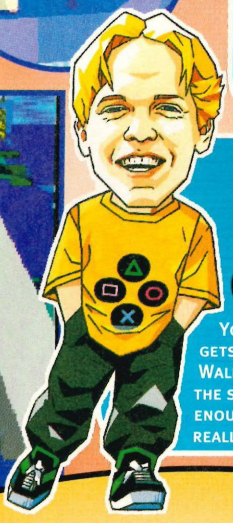
Who is brave enough to tackle this quest? Step forward Cress, the apprentice to an old priest, and Lay, a cute bounty hunter with more than a passing resemblance to a Manga-ised Pamela Anderson. At the beginning of the game you get to choose which hero to play as, although apart from their sex there's no real differences between them. Both come tooled-up with a feeble pop gun and a nifty rolling side-jump to help them avoid nasties.

SIMON COMMENT



Floating Runner is one of those games that could've been excellent. The graphics are certainly nice enough – the cute characters and their worlds have an appealingly simple look, and everything moves *soooo* smoothly – and it plays fine too. However, it lacks that certain 'oomph' that separates good games from great games. For a start the pace is too slow and unexciting, while the view angles are frustratingly restrictive, preventing you getting an overall view of what's going on. Floating Runner is fun, but flawed.

STEVE COMMENT



You know on Catchphrase when someone gets a question blatantly wrong and Roy Walker says "It's good but not right!" Well the same applies to this. It looks nice enough, but there isn't enough else to really engross you. Ah well, life goes on.

OVERALL

Floating Runner is an enjoyable little romp which just lacks sparkle. With 3D platform fans having class titles like Crash Bandicoot and Pandemonium to tempt them, they're unlikely to choose FR!

72 SOUNDS

75 ANIMATION

68 GRAPHICS

80 PLAYABILITY

74

ALTERNATIVES

Crash Bandicoot, Pandemonium or Jumping Flash 2.

REVIEW

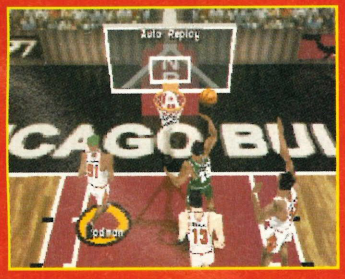
NBA LIVE 97

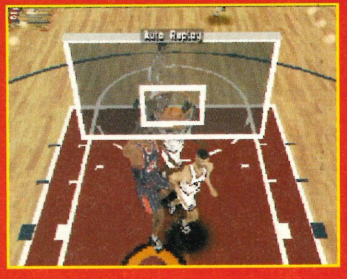
Yeah dudes, come dunk with us a while as we go downtown and drive to the paint for another of those basketball sims that you all love, namely NBA Live '97. This is serious hang time, in your face action. Or something...

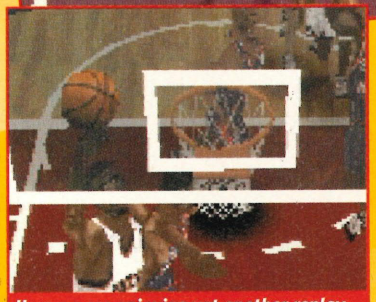
Once upon a time, there was this really tall bloke. He had to wear skis for shoes and needed to cut a hole in the roof of his car to see out without breaking his neck. Anytime he wanted some fashionable trousers, he had to buy two pairs – from Mr. Byrite of course – and sew them together. Things reached an all time low for the tall man in question when he went to kiss a girl he met at a nightclub, and ended up headbutting the light hanging from the ceiling and very nearly electrocuted himself. Anyway, God took pity on this fellow, and all those like him, and created the NBA. Lanky beanpoles all over the world rejoiced at the prospect of being with their own kind. EA must have had a few tall streaks of er, wee, as they decided to honour the NBA with their own version of events with NBA Live '97. And now we're here to see if it's any good. Hurrah!

I'D LIKE TO SEE THAT AGAIN!

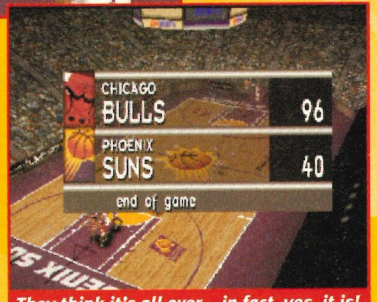
Rubbing salt into the wounds, that's all these are. Flashy replays from a different angle just to take the Michael. And they're totally brilliant! The animations and general feel of the replays is smart, and the views that are adopted are dramatically different to those used in the game. For instance, when someone rebounds and slams from right under the basket, the view switches to a camera looking behind the backboard. And suitably good three pointers will also merit another look!







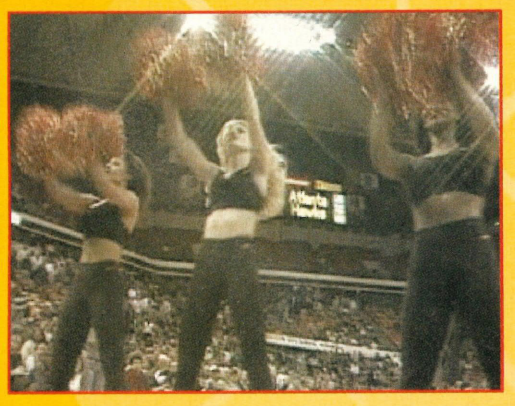
Here we are enjoying yet another replay of the opposition sinking another basket!

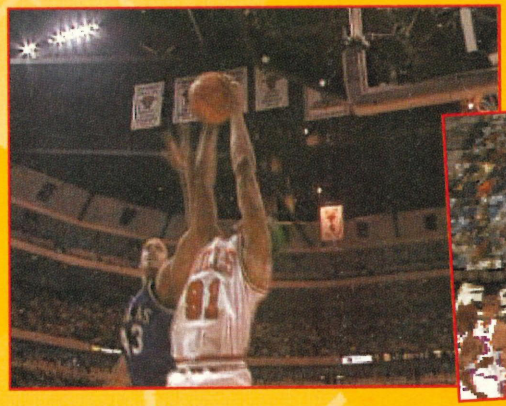


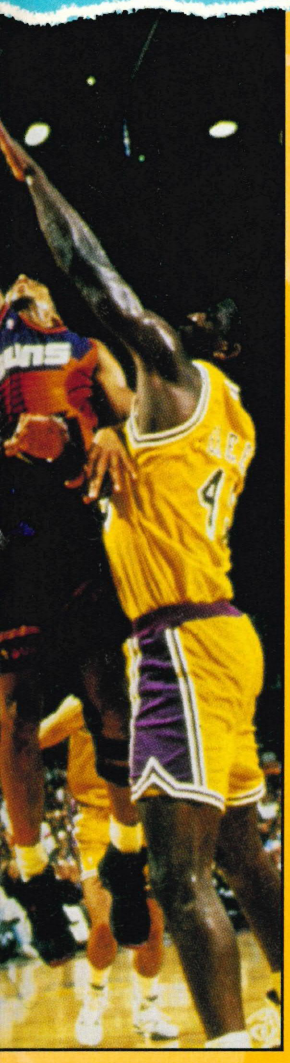
They think it's all over... in fact, yes, it is! And we've taken another total tubbing

LOVELY LOVELY LADIES!

Something which is unique to Live '97 is the half-time show. This comes in the form of an FMV sequence connected to each team. For instance, playing as the Chicago Bulls will bring up various clips showing them in action, along with cheerleader shots intermixed with all of it. Every team has a different one, if only to give you the chance of seeing who has the nicest looking ladies! Cor!

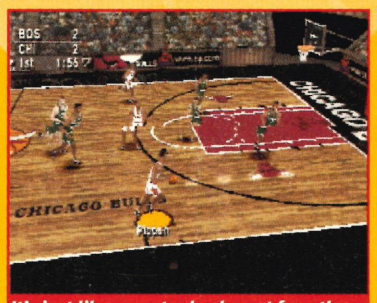




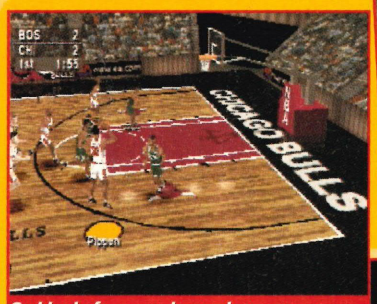


IT'S EASY AS ONE, TWO, THREE!

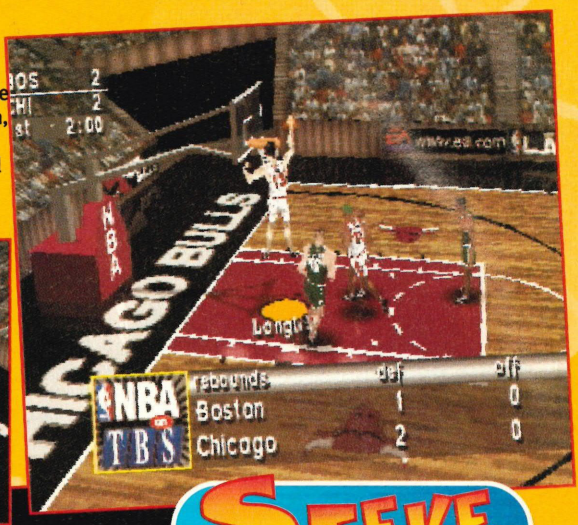
To score a three pointer in Live '97, is extremely easy, once you know how, and will result in you winning every game by comfortable margins. Once you have the chance for a break away, or have stolen the ball, and there's a one or two onto one situation, run directly at the net from a 45° angle. Then, just before you reach the three point arc, press and hold the Shoot button for a second. As you're jumping, the player will shoot, and regardless of whose in front of you, you'll sink it every time.

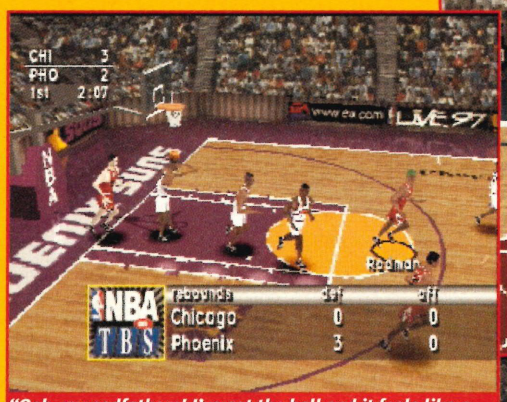


It's just like gym at school apart from the fact that these guys are good at Basketball!

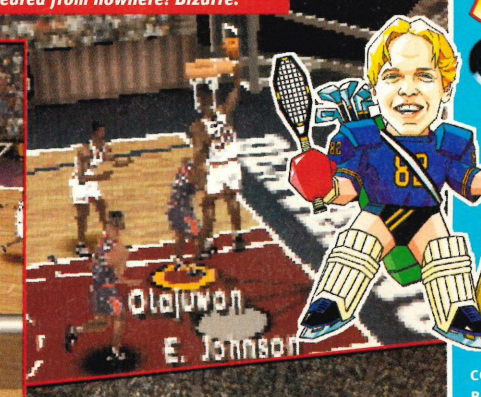


Suddenly from nowhere a huge orange spot appeared from nowhere! Bizarre.

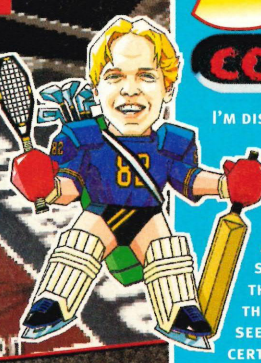




"Ooh, my godfathers! I've got the ball and it feels like a flippin' hot potato! Best get rid double quick!"



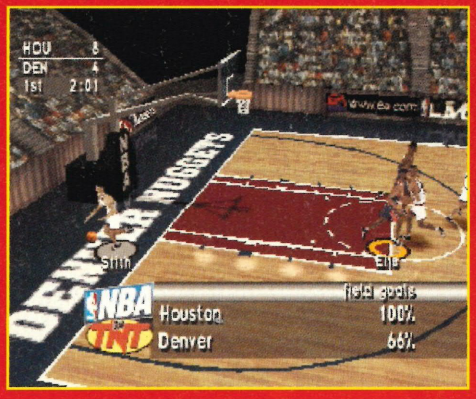
STEVE COMMENT



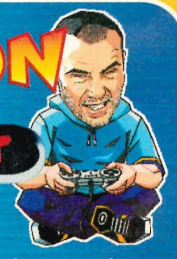
I'M DISCRIMINATED AGAINST ON THIS MAG. BECAUSE I'M THE TALLEST, IT MEANS I HAVE TO DO ALL OF THE BASKETBALL GAMES! MUMMY HELP ME! BUT EVEN SO, SOME OF THEM ARE PRETTY DAMN ENJOYABLE SIMULATIONS AND THANKFULLY, THIS IS ONE OF THEM. I DON'T THINK IT'S THE BEST ONE WE'VE SEEN THIS MONTH, BUT IT CERTAINLY IS VERY GOOD. THE CONSTANT PACE THE GAME PLAYS AT IS BOTH STEADY AND ENTERTAINING, AND THE GRAPHICS ARE PRETTY GOOD TOO. THE ONLY GRIPE I HAVE WITH LIVE '97, IS THAT IT DIDN'T HAVE THE SAME LEVEL OF REALISM AS IN THE ZONE 2, SO I'D BE MORE INCLINED TO WAIT FOR THAT.

ORLANDO HAVE GOT THE RUNS?

Because of the 'Live' element of this game, the programmers had to keep the information flowing at a steady rate to give the indication that you're actually watching it on the TV rather than through the PlayStation. So, at various times during the game, small stat screens appear, telling you how many points the last person to score has got, total blocks for each team, total rebounds. However, if you do really well for a spell, and score loads of points without the other team replying, the computer will tell you you're on 'an 11-0 run' or something similar! Cool.



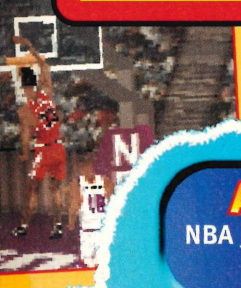
SIMON COMMENT



I REALLY ENJOYED LIVE '97. IT'S A PRETTY COOL REPRESENTATION OF BASKETBALL AND SHOULD KEEP SLAM DUNK FANS HAPPY FOR A GOOD WHILE. ALONG WITH IN THE ZONE 2 THIS IS THE BEST ON OFFER AT THE MOMENT. SO, IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A B'BALL SIM I'D HAVE NO HESITATION RECOMMENDING NBA LIVE '97 TO YOU.

OVERALL

AS BASKETBALL GAMES GO, THIS IS PRETTY GOOD, BUT HAVING HAD SNEAK PREVIEWS OF OTHER RELEASES, I'D WAIT FOR THOSE. STILL, THIS IS VERY PLAYABLE AND WELL WORTH A LOOK IF YOU CAN'T WAIT FOR FORTHCOMING STUFF.



nba finals

87 SOUNDS

89 ANIMATION

84 GRAPHICS

90 PLAYABILITY

86

ALTERNATIVES

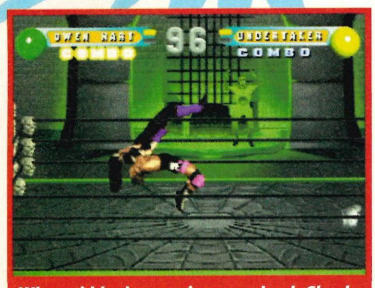
NBA JAM EXTREME, NBA IN THE ZONE 2 AND TOTAL NBA.

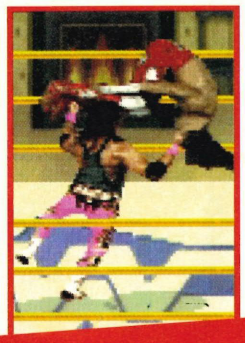
REVIEW

WWF IN YOUR HOUSE

Time to climb into that skin-tight leotard, smear yourself in oil, and put on a lot of make-up as we all go round Simon's house. Actually, it could be anyone's house, because the WWF are headed for your gaff!

Of all the places that I can think of where the WWF could be, In My House certainly isn't one of them. Locked in the basement of a sinking ship is a possible alternative. Or in the middle of a bomb site would also be acceptable – it'll be just like our offices then – oops! I can't say that! But in my house. Nooooo, please. I'd rather watch a bunch of old grannies having a competition to see who can wet themselves the quickest than look at a load of slimy men pretending to hit each other. WWF is pants, and the sooner you realise this the better. But having said that, they do occasionally make quite funny games from the licence, so it's not all bad. I just hope this one follows suit...

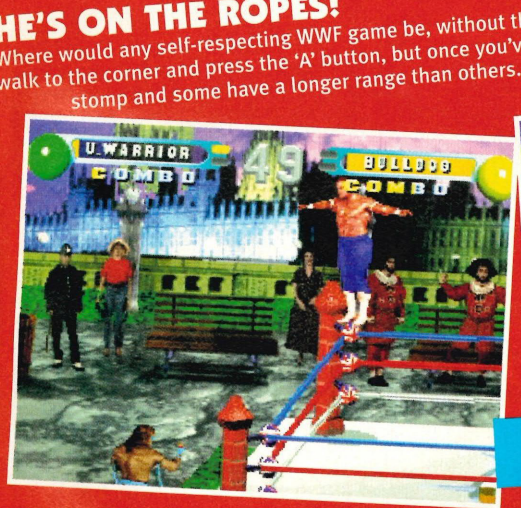


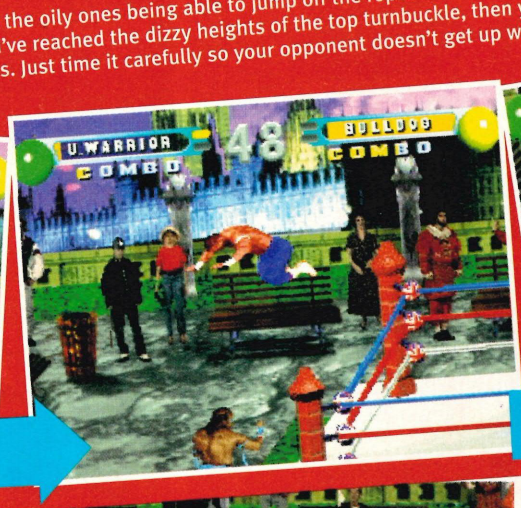


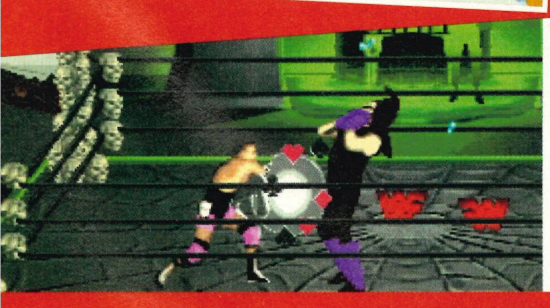
Who said body-popping was dead. Check out these two dudes in spangly pants!

HE'S ON THE ROPES!

Where would any self-respecting WWF game be, without the oily ones being able to jump off the ropes to flatten floored opponents. Getting up there is simple. Simply walk to the corner and press the 'A' button, but once you've reached the dizzy heights of the top turnbuckle, then you've a choice. Every button does a different dive or stomp and some have a longer range than others. Just time it carefully so your opponent doesn't get up when you jump. Otherwise, that's gotta hurt!







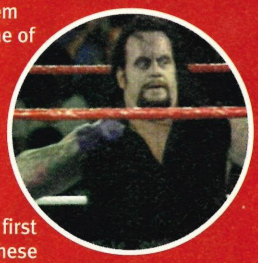
TAKE THAT! AND THAT! AND THAT!

The more standard attacks you do in this game the better, as every hit will add a little more to the Combo Meter. When this reaches the max, the character can go mental and perform 15 to 18 hit combos! Each wrestler's combo attack starts differently, but the outcome is the same: MEGA DAMAGE!!!

BY: ACCLAIM OUT: DECEMBER PRICE: £44.99

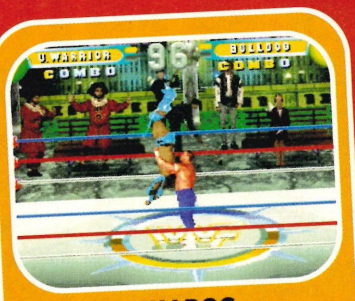
THE NAME'S TAKER – UNDER-TAKER!

Some of them stayed, some of them didn't. Others came back from old games and others are here for the first time ever. These are the characters from the starship WWF who have popped round for tea and biscuits. These wrestlers are the ones who weren't in Wrestlemania.



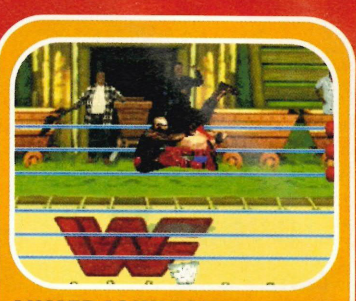
VADAR

You know when you sing the song "Who ate all the pies?" well this is your answer. Big fat bloke with a dad called Darth. Probably!



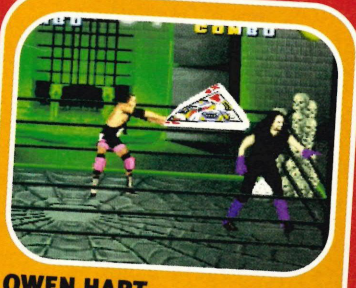
BRITISH BULLDOG

When he first burst into the WWF scene, he was regarded as good. Don't ask us how, but everybody hates him these days. Weird.



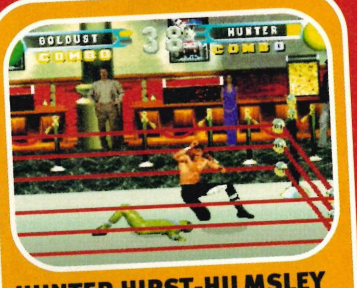
AHMED JOHNSON

Who? What? Where? When? How? How long has this guy been in the WWF. No doubt one the anoraks out there will write in and tell us.



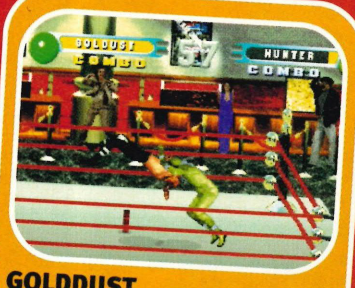
OWEN HART

He's the dad or brother of Bret. Someone did tell me once, but by that time I'd stopped liking WWF and gone and got a life!



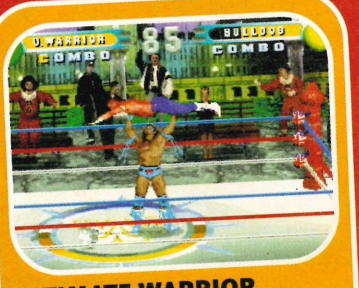
HUNTER HIRST-HILMSLEY

Excuse me? Obviously trying to be aristocratic-monocle-wearing-ponce-of-an-Englishman then. And he succeeds by all accounts.



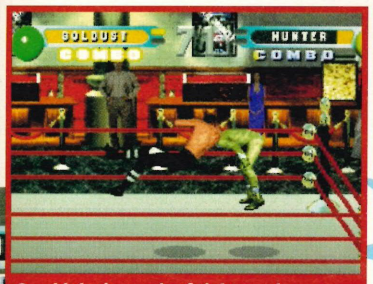
GOLDDUST

The less said about 'it' the better. Wears a tight gold outfit and touches 'itself' a lot. Hmmm, I bet 'it' always got picked last in PE!



ULTIMATE WARRIOR

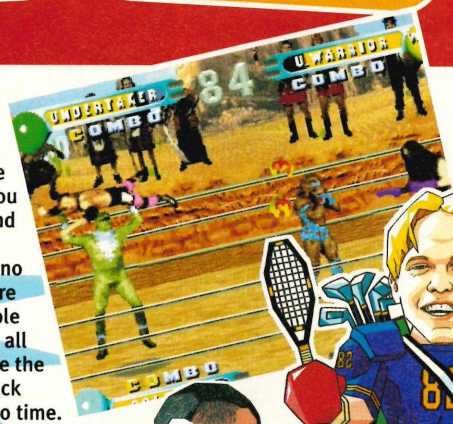
This is someone I remember. Always used to bang his chest and shake the ropes like a nutter. And d'you know what? He still does!

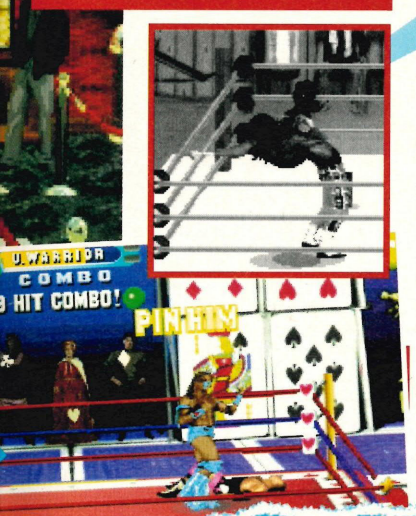


One bloke in a pair of tights embraces another fellow in a headlock. 'Ello sailor!

I LIKE HAVING A MULTI-TAP!

More and more games these days are making you glad you invested in that multi-tap and have a mate with a couple more pads, and WWF IYH is no exception. Hook it up, acquire the relevant number of people and let the chaos rock. With all four of you on-screen at once the punches, kicks and Belly-Back Suplexs' will be flowing in no time. Trust us here, this is a proper good laugh played this way!





STEVE COMMENT

Now, I thought Wrestlemania was a top game. It played really well, looked quite nice, and had a fair lifespan in a two-player game. So what about this one? Well, it's exactly the same as the first except the graphics don't look as well defined and it has a few new fighters. If you love WWF, and the first one didn't have your fav bloke in it, then hey, it might be more than your cup of tea. But people looking for a fresh outing would be more advised to go elsewhere for your dose of grappling excitement.

SIMON COMMENT

Not really my cup of tea this at all. I absolutely hate WWF on the telly at the best of times, but a videogame – NOOOOOO! However, I suppose the humour element of WWF In Your House makes for a giggle and multi-tap matches are a laugh too. If you haven't got the original WWF, then IYH could be worth yer loot. Rumble!

OVERALL

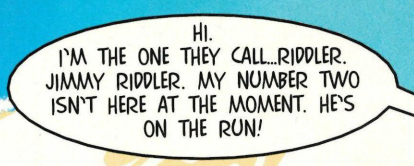
A bit too similar to the original for its own good and somehow the graphics seem to be a little worse too. Smart for WWF novices, but somewhat of a letdown for the rest of us.

ALTERNATIVES
WWF Wrestlemania and Power Move Pro Wrestling.

76 SOUNDS	80 ANIMATION
72 GRAPHICS	80 PLAYABILITY

78

REVIEW



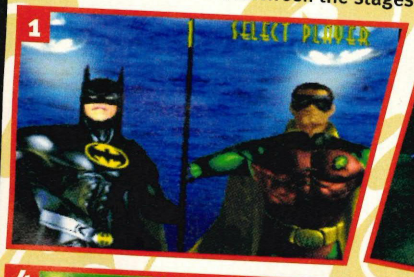
BATMAN FOREVER

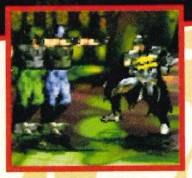
Tie-ins! Not enough of 'em I say! Where's the game of the film, the cartoon, the brekkie cereal, the super-hero based on a winged mammal? Oh, on these pages, apparently...

Batman eh? The caped crusader's been cruising around on almost every other system since computer games were invented, yet he's only taken it upon himself to hit our PlayStations now. Delusions of grandeur or what? I mean okay, he's got a few hit films, a load of comics and all those merchandising deals to think about, but he should spare a few minutes for his devoted games fans, we've got (sniff) feelings too. But at last he's gracing us with his presence, and he's even brought his mate Robin to help him out against a ton of baddies. Let's just hope he's worth the wait...

OI! HANDS OFF MY HOLO MODE!

So you thought your mate was there to help you in the two-player mode? Well, you thought wrong, because while you're both trying to beat the crap out of the baddies, you're also competing against each other to win power-ups. The better you do, the more weapons you get to choose from between the stages

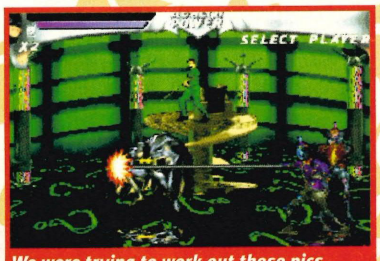




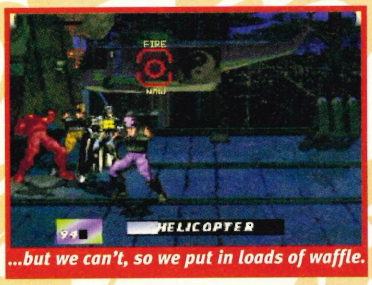
The idea behind the last stage is a simple one. You have to defeat ALL of the bosses from EVERY level, one after the other!

BOSSES, FAHSANDS OF 'EM!

As if the never ending gangs of hoodlums weren't enough to keep you busy, there's also a load of tough-nut bosses out to get you for wearing your underpants outside your trousers. These include a huge chopper (young man!), a bunch of robots and the lovely Sugar and Spice (girls). Unfortunately, there's not a digitised Drew Barrymore in sight. What a crying shame.



We were trying to work out these pics...



...but we can't, so we put in loads of waffle.

BY: ACCLAIM OUT: JANUARY PRICE: £44.99

All these explosions and fights, and the party still rocks!

Holy Ballroom dress Batman! Yes, yes. Another crap pun.

PICK ON SOMEONE YOUR OWN SIZE!

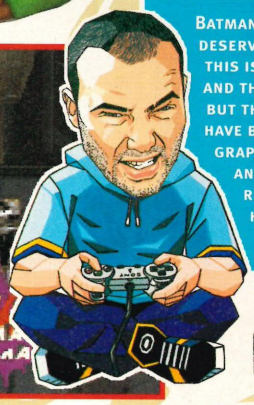
While a lot of the pick-ups give you extra weapons and power to play with, some only exist to add hassle to an already frantic level. One of the worst shrinks you down to midget size, forcing you to fight your foes at knee-cap level. Don't worry though, it wears off eventually, and you can dish out a pint-sized kicking to boot! Hey! Down here!

I'M A READY BREK KID!

If you want to have that special "I'm a radioactive Batman" glow, then grab as many power-ups as possible. When your energy gauge reaches maximum, you'll increase your power level (up to a maximum of three), allowing you to inflict even greater damage on your enemies, as well as briefly giving you a lovely glowing tan. But don't stock up on the aftersun, it won't last!

SIMON COMMENT

BATMAN IS A CHARACTER WHO DESERVES A GREAT GAME, BUT SADLY THIS ISN'T IT. THE IDEAS ARE GOOD AND THERE'S SOME COOL TOUCHES, BUT THIS COULD (AND SHOULD) HAVE BEEN SO MUCH BETTER. THE GRAPHICS AREN'T UP TO SCRATCH AND THE GAMEPLAY IS TOO REPETETIVE TO KEEP YOU HAPPY FOR LONG. EVEN IF YOU LOVE THE CAPED CRUSADER.



STEVE COMMENT

I THINK SI'S BEEN TOO GENEROUS WITH THIS. IT DESERVES A PROPER TUBBING. WITH SUCH A STRONG LICENCE BEHIND THEM, WHY HAS IT TURNED OUT LIKE THIS? AWFUL GRAPHICS, AND IT PLAYS LIKE A DOG TOO. SORRY, BUT THIS IS PLAIN PANTS, POO AND PLOP. ERRGGHH!

OVERALL

AN AVERAGE BEAT-'EM-UP WHICH DOESN'T SHOW OFF THE BATMAN LICENCE TO GREAT EFFECT. IF YOU WANT BATMAN ON YOUR TELLY, BUY THE FILMS – IT'LL BE CHEAPER TOO.

ALTERNATIVES

CONTRA LEGACY OF WAR, TIME COMMANDO – AND THAT'S ABOUT IT!

71 SOUNDS

67 ANIMATION

72 GRAPHICS

68 PLAYABILITY

71

SPECIAL

IT'S T XMA

HO! HO! HO! HELLO SONNY, COME SIT 'PON ME KNEE AND TELL OLD SANTEE WHAT YOU'D LIKE IN YOUR SACK THIS YEAR. A PLAYSTATION PERIPHERAL, YOU SAY? HMM, NOT REALLY MY SPECIALITY TO BE HONEST. FORTUNATELY, ALL MY LITTLE HELPERS ARE PRETTY KNOWLEDGEABLE ON SUCH THINGS, SO WHAT SAY WE GO ASK THEM WHAT'S HOT, AND WHAT IS NOT!

STEERING WHEELS

We have two wheels to test here; the Per4mer Turbo Wheel and the PSX Steering Wheel. The Per4mer is a wheel-only unit, with accelerate and brake functions sited as thumb buttons, while the PSX Steering Wheel has a separate set of foot pedals. Cool. And the games they'll be tested on today are... Andretti Racing and F1.

PSX STEERING WHEEL

THE FIRST (AND VERY POSITIVE) THING TO BE SAID ABOUT THIS WHEEL IS THAT IT'S INCREDIBLY SOLID. THE WHEEL IS PERFECTLY BALANCED, SPRING-LOADED FOR A REALISTIC RETURN, AND ACCOMPANIED BY A SEPARATE PEDAL UNIT THAT IS EQUALLY TOUGH. ANOTHER PLUS POINT IS THE FACT THAT, REALISING HOW HARD IT IS TO NEGOTIATE OPTION SCREENS WITH A WHEEL, THERE'S ALSO A MINIATURE JOYPAD IN THE CENTRE OF THE WHEEL. PLAYING WITH THIS WHEEL ADDS TREMENDOUSLY TO BOTH GAMES AS YOU NOT ONLY HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MASTERING THE GAME ITSELF, BUT ALSO MASTERING THE CONTROL. I FOUND THAT I OCCASIONALLY HIT THE BACK BUTTONS WHEN SLIDING THE WHEEL BACK TO NEUTRAL AFTER A TIGHT TURN — BUT THAT'S MY FAULT FOR BEING SUCH A SLOPPY DRIVER! EXPENSIVE BUT A MUST FOR DIE-HARD RACING FANS.

SCORE: 5/5

Price: £79.99

Contact: Leda Media Products: 01992 503133

PER4MER

THE ONLY PROBLEMS WITH THE PER4MER COME FROM THE FACT THAT (A) THE ACCELERATE AND BRAKE FUNCTIONS ARE UNDER YOUR THUMBS, SO YOU HAVE TO KEEP YOUR HANDS GRIPPED WHEN TURNING (ALTHOUGH THIS WHEEL DOESN'T ACTUALLY LOCK AS FAR AS THE PSX WHEEL), AND (B) BECAUSE IT'S A LIGHTER UNIT THAN THE PSX STEERING WHEEL, IT'S EVEN HARDER TO KEEP IT ON YOUR DESK! OTHER THAN THAT, IT WORKS AS WELL AS YOU'D EXPECT FOR A WHEEL HALF THE PRICE OF ITS COMPETITOR. IT DOESN'T HAVE THE SAME SPRING-LOADED FEEL OF THE PSX WHEEL, BUT ENHANCES THE GAMES NONTHELESS, AND IS - AT THE END OF THE DAY - MORE FUN THAN JUST USING A JOYPAD. COOL!

SCORE: 4/5

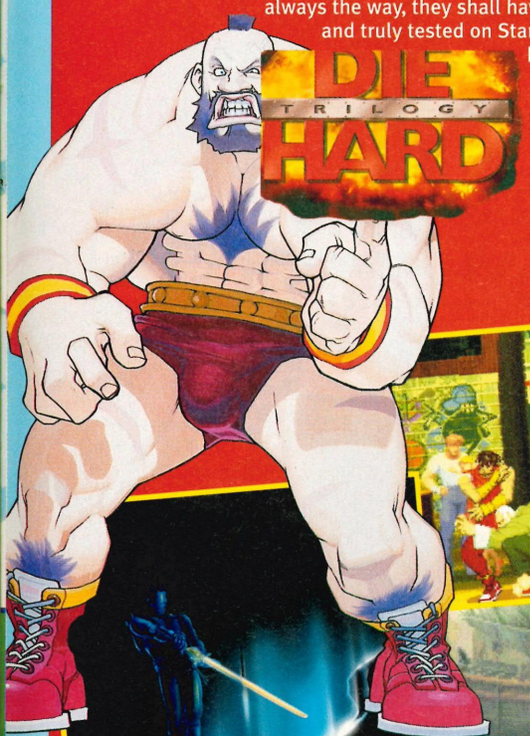
Price: £39.99

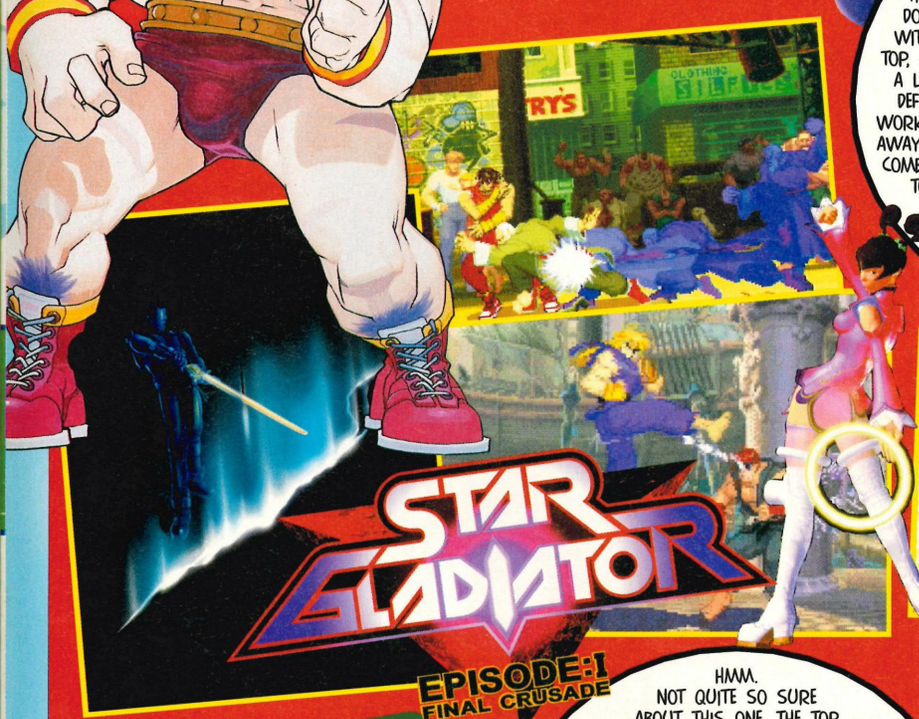
Contact: United Commercial Technology: 0181 449 6565

HE MEAN MACHINES
S PERIPHERAL ROUND-UP!

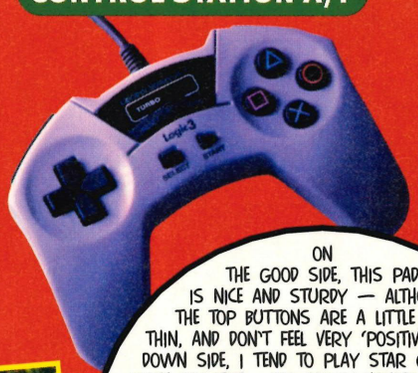
JOYPADS

We have three joypads lined up for testing today; the Competition Pro PS8, the Control Station A/F, and the Competition Pro PS18 pad. And, as is always the way, they shall have their attributes well and truly tested on Star Gladiator and Street Fighter Alpha 2.

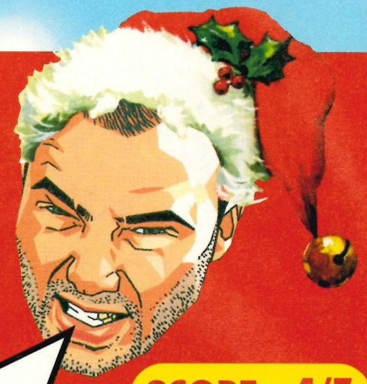




CONTROL STATION A/F



ON THE GOOD SIDE, THIS PAD IS NICE AND STURDY — ALTHOUGH THE TOP BUTTONS ARE A LITTLE BIT TOO THIN, AND DON'T FEEL VERY 'POSITIVE'. ON THE DOWN SIDE, I TEND TO PLAY STAR GLADIATORS WITH MY LEFT - I'M CAGGY HANDED - HAND ON TOP, AND HAVING THE FOUR BUTTONS INSET MADE IT A LITTLE HARD TO ALWAYS GET THE PLASMA AND DEFENCES ACTIVATED WHEN I WANTED. THE TURBO WORKS WELL HERE, HELPING TO GET KICK SEQUENCES AWAY, AS WELL AS ALL THOSE 'A'S FOR THE PLASMA COMBOS. PLAYING SF ALPHA 2, THE PROBLEMS TEND TO COME, NOT FROM THE TOP BUTTONS, BUT FROM THE OTHERWISE COMFORTABLE DPAD. STILL, PATIENCE MAKES PERFECT, AND OVERALL, THE PAD SCORES WELL.



SCORE: 4/5

Price: £12.99

Contact:
Spectravideo:
0181 902 2211

COMPETITION PRO PS8

SCORE: 3/5

Price: £17.99

Contact:
PowerPlay Ltd:
01703 653377

COMPETITION PRO PS18

HMM. NOT QUITE SO SURE ABOUT THIS ONE. THE TOP BUTTONS ARE A BIT TOO HIGH OUT OF THE TOP OF THE PAD (AND QUITE 'RATTLY') AND THE DPAD IS SIMILARLY SEATED A TAD TOO HIGH. THE MAIN FOUR BUTTONS ARE NICE AND POSITIVE, BUT THE DPAD MAKES YOU WORK QUITE HARD TO GET THE SFA2 MOVES YOU WANT. OH, AND BEWARE THE 'SLOW' MODE (IE AUTOMATICALLY TURNING THE PAUSE BUTTON ON AND OFF) 'COS I GUARANTEE IT'LL SET OFF ANY EPILEPTICS. IT'S WORTH MENTIONING THAT THIS PAD HAS TURBO SETTINGS FOR EACH BUTTON. PLAYING STAR GLADIATOR 'OVER-HAND' WITH THE COMP' PRO IS PRETTY GOOD, WITH EXCELLENT ACCURACY FOR PLASMA MOVES AND DEFENCES. AND, ER... THAT'S IT.

SCORE: 3/5

Price: £24.99

Contact:
PowerPlay Ltd:
01703 653377

HEY! NICE PAD! APART FROM BEING A STURDY ALL-ROUNDER, THIS PAD ALSO FEATURES THE BEST TURBO FUNCTION (WITH A VERY ERGONOMICALLY-PLEASING WAY OF TURNING EACH INDIVIDUAL BUTTON ON AND OFF). STAR GLADIATOR IS SPOT-ON TO PLAY, AND ANY 'OVER-HAND' PLAYERS WILL FIND THE BUTTONS FINE, BUT WITH SFA2 (WHERE I PERSONALLY USE MY THUMBS!) I FOUND THE MAIN FOUR BUTTONS JUST A BIT TOO 'MUDDY' TO GET THE REALLY FAST COMBOS — AND THINGS LIKE GOUKI'S 'QUACKASHANGO' MOVE — HAPPENING AS EASILY AS I'D HAVE LIKED. STILL, NOT A BAD PAD, BUT STILL NOT ANY BETTER THAN THE STANDARD PAD.

SPECIAL

LIGHT GUNS

Though there aren't exactly tons of games available that utilise light guns, we do have the likes of the incredible Die Hard Trilogy to look forward to, so please welcome Konami's Hyper Blaster and Spectravideo's Predator.

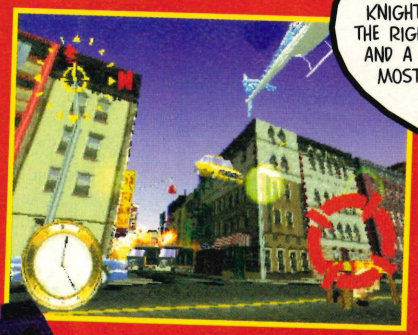
PREDATOR

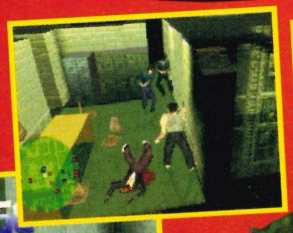
SCORE: 3/5

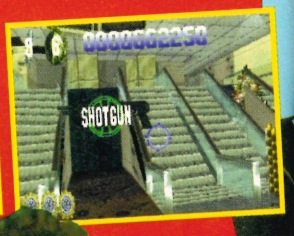
Price: TBA

Contact:
Spectravideo:
0181 902 2211

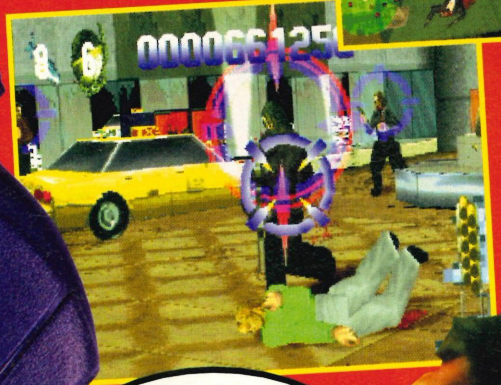
EASILY THE BEST THING ABOUT THE PREDATOR IS THE LOOK OF THE THING. IT IS JUDGE DREDD'S LAW-GIVER. IT HAS A FALSE PUMP-ACTION CHAMBER THAT LIGHTS UP (JUST LIKE THE FRONT OF KITT IN KNIGHT RIDER — REMEMBER?) AND A SECOND BUTTON OVER ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE BARREL. IT ALSO HAS AN AUTO-FIRE SLIDER AND A RAPID FIRE SPEED CONTROL. UNFORTUNATELY, IT ISN'T THE MOST ACCURATELY CALIBRATED GUN IVE SEEN, AND HAVING TO USE A SECOND HAND TO ACTIVATE THE SECOND FIRE ISN'T ALL THAT COMFORTABLE. STILL, DAMN GOOD FUN!







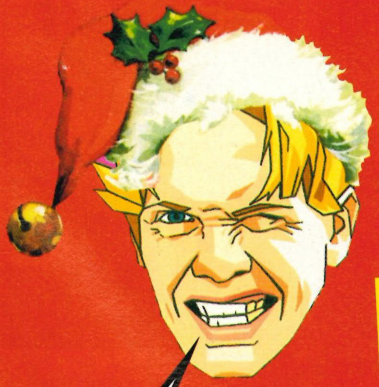
HYPER BLASTER



SCORE: 5/5

Price: TBA

Contact:
Konami:
01895 853000



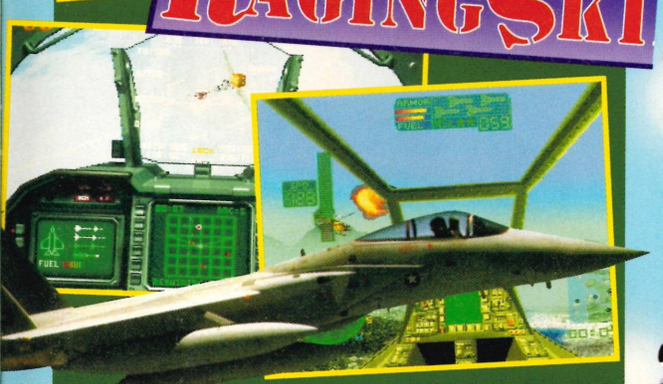
OH!
ME 'NADS! THEY'RE REET ITCHY FROM ALL THESE EXPLOSIONS AND SHRAPNEL FLYING EVERYWHERE! I CAN'T WAIT TO GET HOME AND RUB SOME JOHNSON'S BABY TALCUM POWDER ON THEM! QUACK!

NOW
THIS IS MORE LIKE IT! THE KONAMI GUN NOT ONLY HAS A BETTER WEIGHT, BUT FEELS MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE TO GRIP IN ONE HAND, AND HAS THE SECOND FIRE BUTTON MORE CONVENIENTLY UNDER YOUR THUMB. THIS MEANS THAT IF YOU PREFER HOLDING GUNS THE MORE TRADITIONAL ONE-HAND-ONE-EYE WAY, YOU'RE ABLE TO DO SO. THE CALIBRATION ON THE KONAMI GUN ALSO SEEMS MUCH TIGHTER; ALLOWING THE PRACTICED SHARP-SHOOTER TO GO FOR ACCURACY POINTS RATHER THAN JUST LOOSING OFF AS MANY ROUNDS PER GAME AS POSSIBLE. THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH THIS GUN IS THAT IT'S NOT GOING TO BE AS EASY TO GET A HOLD OF FOR A WHILE, BUT KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED, EH?

WIN! WIN! WIN!

JOYSTICKS

There haven't been a tremendous amount of sticks for the PlayStation (for the obvious 'where do all the buttons go?' reason) but the PS Flight Force Pro was such an impressive looking thing that we just HAD to give it a go. And for today's test we shall be making use of Black Dawn and Raging Skies...



PS FLIGHT FORCE PRO

OH BUGGER. YES, THOUGH IT WAS GREAT MUCKING ABOUT BEFORE THE GAME LOADED (YOU KNOW, PRETENDING TO BE TOM CRUISE AND MAKING ALL THE SOUNDS MYSELF WHILE SWOOPING AROUND AND GURGLING THE AFTERBURNER NOISES) IT WAS THE BEST PART OF IMPOSSIBLE TO PLAY ANYTHING WITH THE JOYSTICK WITHOUT SPENDING ABOUT AN HOUR REPROGRAMMING THE ENTIRE UNIT! ACCORDING TO THE NICE MAN AT SPECTRAVIDEO, ALL THE DEVELOPERS HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED WITH THE KIT AND SHOULD BE DEVELOPING GAMES COMPATIBLE WITH THE THING SOON. SO, LIKE I SAY... BUGGER.

SCORE: 5/5

Price: £59.99

Contact:
Spectravideo:
0181 902 2211

What sort of chums would we be if we teased the life out of you about how cool and groovy all these joypads, sticks, guns and wheels were, but didn't give you the chance to get your grubby mitts on some for free!?! Well worry ye not gang, 'cos we HAVE got prizes galore for some lucky MMP readers.

WE'VE GOT...

How about flinkin' five Competition Pro PS18s, five Competition Pro PS8s, three PSX Steering Wheels, and five — YES FIVE! — Spectravideo guns to give away! BOK! and BOK! again.
Yes, it's the truth (don't ya' know it!) and all you have to do to stand a chance of winning is to answer the following questions and plop them on a postcard with your name and address to:
PERIPHERAL PARADISE, Mean Machines PlayStation, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1M 3AU.

IMPORTANT! You need to tell us which peripheral you'd like the most because it's a 'first out of the hat gets what he wants' situation we're dealing with here, so include (for example) "I'm Bob Winner, and I'd like (1) a Steering Wheel, (2) a PS8, (3) a Control Station A/F" etc. Got that? Cool. Let's have a little look at the questions then:

Q1. GUNS
According to aged and unattractive rocker, Rod Stewart, "Young guns, be free..." when?
(a) Tonight
(b) Next Wednesday
(c) Around that time of year when flying ants start crawling out of the pavement.

Q2. JOYPADS
MMP has it's very own sex goddess in the guise of, Joy. Is she best described as:
(a) A short brunette who wouldn't catch your attention in a bikini.
(b) A hunch-backed forty-plus moose, with ginger hair and staggering halitosis.
(c) The sort of stereotypical, large-breasted, high-heeled blonde bimbo you'd expect from a bunch of sad journalists.

Q3. WHEELS
How many wheels would you find on a tandem?
(a) 1
(b) 2
(c) 6

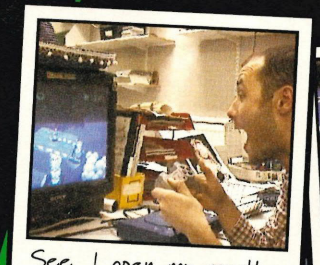
IT'S NOT JUST ME BREAST THAT'S RED! BRRR!

SPECIAL

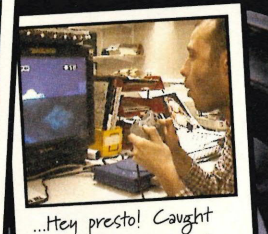
IT'S CO PAN

Fancy enjoying the spectacular world of Pandemonium!? Well, check out our top compo and you could become the lucky owner of this brilliant camcorder...

Last month we reviewed Pandemonium! and awarded it a huge 92% granting Fargus the honour of our much-lauded 'Red Hot' award! Now, do you remember us wobbling on about how fantastic and intelligent all the camera angles are that make the game so intuitive to use? Well, that got us thinking about how nice it would be for you to simulate your own brilliant 'float-cam'. But how many of you own a state-of-the-art camcorder? Not many we'll bet! So we teamed up with our pals BMG and decided to give away this brill Sanyo VMEX 480 mm camcorder worth £599.00 which also comes with over £100 worth of goodies! Plus our recipe for simulating your own real-life game of Pandemonium! Oh, we've also got five copies of the game to give away too. Anyway here's the recipe:



See, I open my mouth, the wasp flies in and...



...Hey presto! Caught the stripey blighter!

1. Take a your camcorder – if you win it! – and strap it to a three metre stick.
2. Insert the stick into the back of your trousers, but in such a fashion the camcorder points towards your back.
3. Now travel to the following locations; The Great Wall of China, Hadrian's Wall, The Hanging Gardens of Babylon, Mount Vesuvius, The Ewok Village, The New Forest and any Ikea superstore to completely replicate the worlds of Pandemonium!

NB. To truly recreate the 'wacky' world of Pandemonium please ensure you do lots of running, jumping and spinning. Also make sure you scream words like "Numbnuts!!", and please, please remember to turn your camcorder on!

MPLETE DEMONIUM!

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS!

To complete your Pandemonium! recipe just answer this easy question and then send your answer to the address below:

What is Fargus' job when he's not on a platforming quest?

a) Squirrel
b) Plumber
c) Jester

I WANT ME OWN VIRTUAL PANDEMONIUM!
Mean Machines PlayStation
Emap Images
Priory Court
30-32 Farringdon Lane
EC1R 3AU

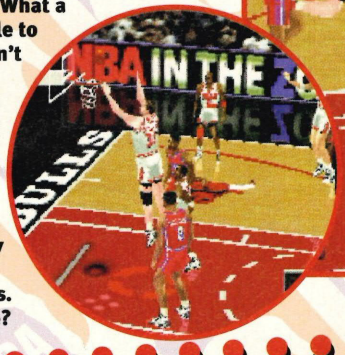
Please note: The closing date for entries is January 17th 1997, so get busy!

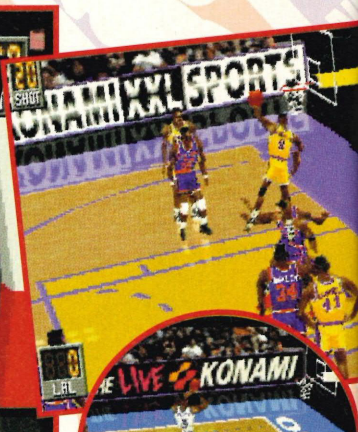
PREVIEW

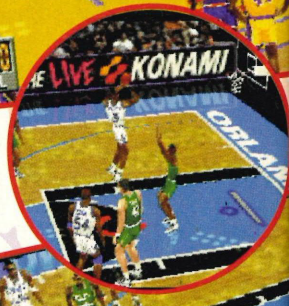
NBA IN THE ZONE 2

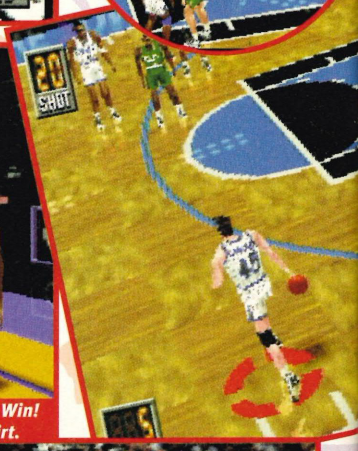
If I had a tenner for the amount of times I've written the words 'basketball' and 'NBA' this month, I'd be able to buy all of Shaq, Jordan and Co and still have enough change to move into Buckingham Palace!

If you ever watch NBA on the telly, listen out for the commentators. They talk a lot about the 'little guys' who play, and go especially mental if the midget pulls off a dunk. Yet when they pop up the stats for the bloke, it turns out he's six-foot-three or something. I mean, excuse me? Small? That's huge for god's sake! If you saw someone of that sort of height walking down the street, you'd probably think "What a bean pole," and have a chuckle to yourself. You certainly wouldn't think "My word, who is that little person heading towards me?" But then that's America for you. Home of fat people, Baywatch and NBA; the best basketball league in the world. And without that, we wouldn't have all these lovely PlayStation b'ball games to write about. Yes, lovely games. Ha-ha. Aren't we lucky people?



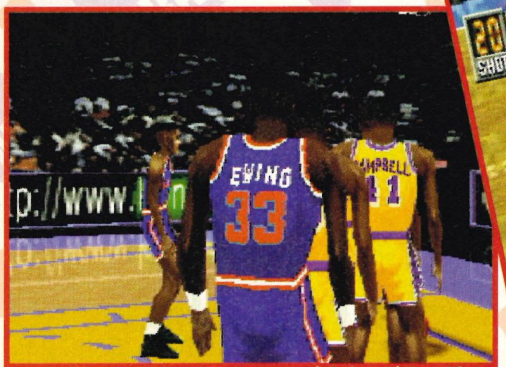




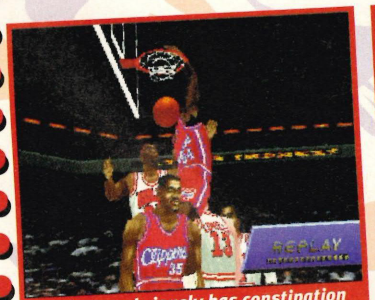


IN YOUR FACE!

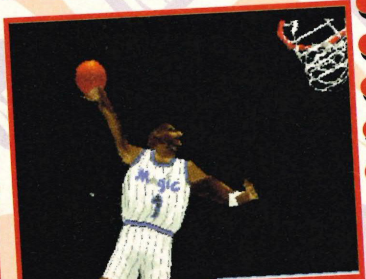
The dunks in NBA Jam are pretty funny and, of course, completely OTT. Which is why the 'sensible' jams in this version are really satisfying. The most outrageous you're likely to get are reverse, over-the-head slams, but when you have a player trailing in your wake, it's all very satisfying and enough to raise any onlookers out of their seats in awe of your skills. Hmm.



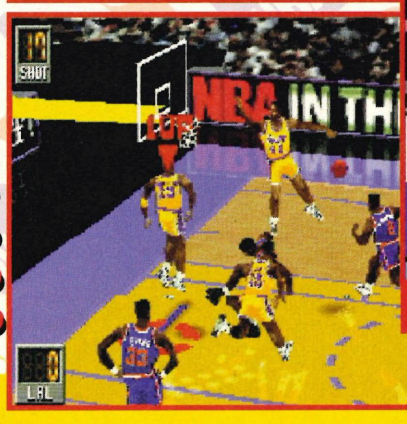
Today's competition. Is 33's name a) Ewing, b) You Win! or c) You what? Tough one that, answers on a T-shirt.

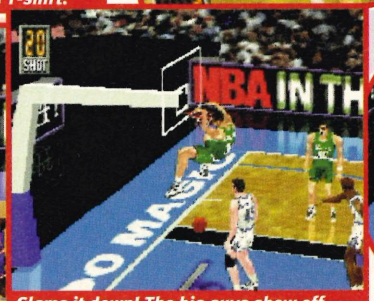


Number 35 obviously has constipation judging by the look on his face. Parp!



flies through the air with all the grace of... erm... a salmon! Well they jump too!

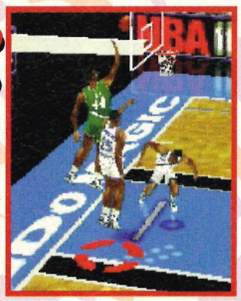


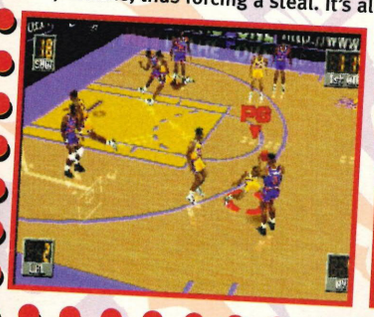


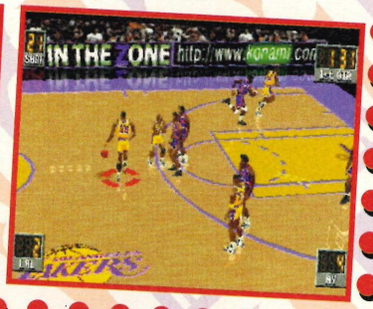
Slams it down! The big guys show off after a dunk by hanging onto the rim!

A LESSON IN BASKETBALL...

ITZ 2 has a very high level of realism, because all the players' animations and tactical awareness are top notch. The difference being that to progress any distance into the game on the harder difficulty settings, these tactics must be used. One of the plays is the 'screen', or a 'legal barge'. You can set a player so that he 'charges' your marker away from you, giving a vital few seconds to get a shot in, or free up another colleague. If a good player is causing you problems, you can double team him or you can set a full court press, where you attempt to keep the other team in their own half for as long as possible, thus forcing a steal. It's all very good you know.

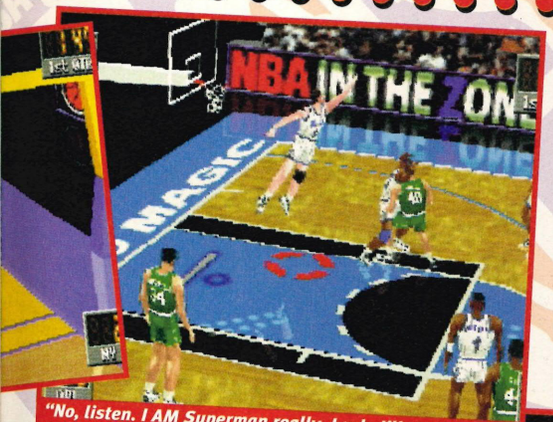




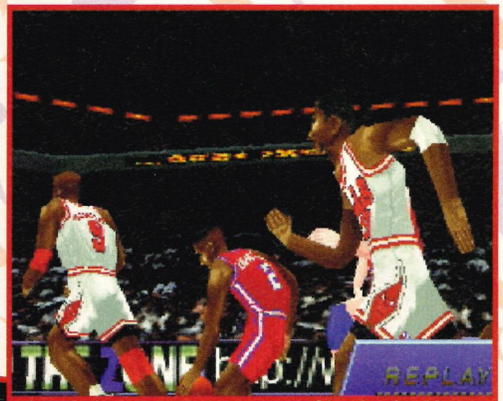


OOOOHHHH, YOU FLASH GIT YOU!

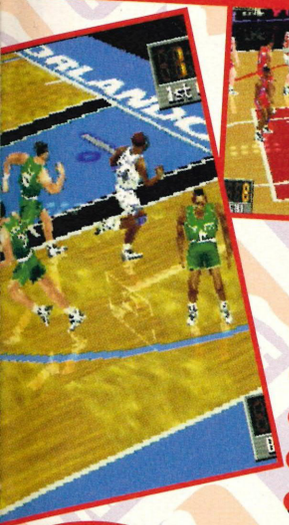
Elaborately throwing the ball through the net in a slam dunking style-e is all well and groovy, but there are times when you can't drive at the net because of defenders. So, to counter this, the game lets you stop a dunk in mid-flight and spin the ball under any raised arms trying to block you. Press Shoot to start the dunk movement, when you're in the correct position, and within a second, hit the Action button and watch in wonder as your bloke performs loads of spins and flips to slip the ball into the net. If you're extremely lucky that is!

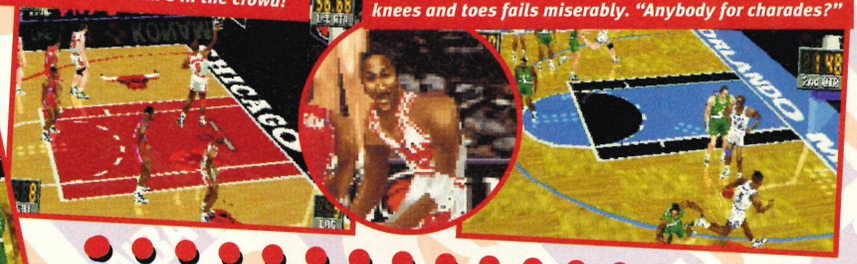


"No, listen. I AM Superman really. Look, I'll even prove it. Watch me fly." Either that or his mum's in the crowd!



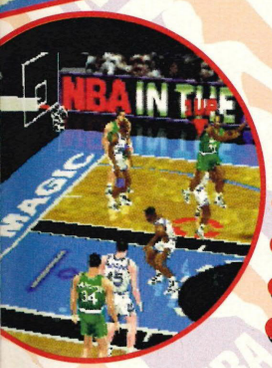
The red players attempt at a game of heads, shoulders, knees and toes fails miserably. "Anybody for charades?"



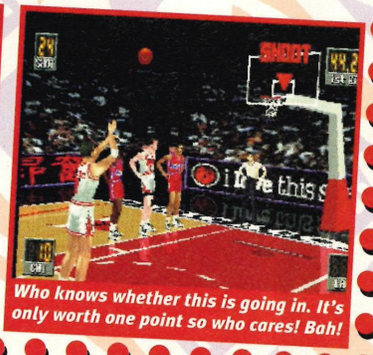


A THROW OF THE FREE VARIETY!

Sensible is the name of the game here, so for all those who've still got NBA Jam in their minds, the free throws will be a bit of surprise. These appear after a defensive foul on an opponent and are simple to work out but not so easy to pull off. The view changes so that the net and the thrower are all in shot, and then an arrow cursor appears above the net moving very quickly from side to side. All you have to do is stop it above the net to get it in.



Good timing is required here, as the 'shoot' icon moves pretty quickly!



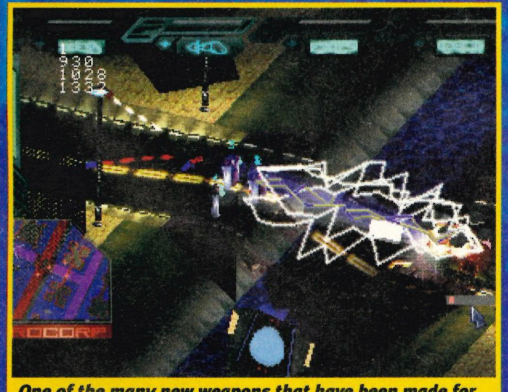
Who knows whether this is going in. It's only worth one point so who cares! Bah!

PREVIEW

SYNDICATE

Imagine you and three of your mates having the freedom of cities and towns, with loads of weapons, rocket launchers and stuff, and your sole objective is to destroy everything in site! Cheap Arnie movie rip-off it ain't. This is Syndicate Wars!

The year is considerably further on in time than we can perceive – that means we know that SW is set a hundred years or so further than the original, but we don't really know when the first was set... d'oh! Anyway, The Corporation – or EuroCorp for short – who secured global domination at the end of the first installment have become a bit lazy in the midst of their power – they've probably gone on holiday or something, and in the mean time, the chip which controlled the minds of the population and caused all the problems in the first game has thrown a wobbler and malfunctioned again. Now all these religious nutters have cropped up again trying to make everyone turn against EuroCorp and so the futures looking even worse than a Jimmy Hill lookalike contest. Guess what? It's your job to come in and save the world again by killing everyone. Well I'm ready if you are...



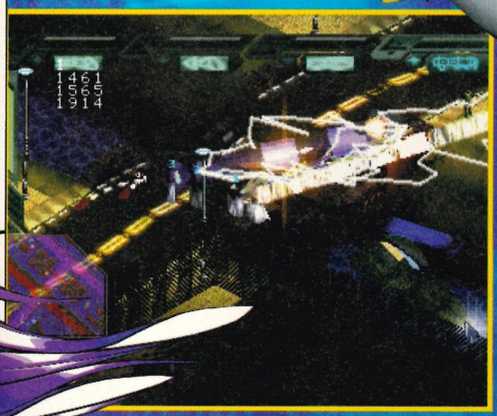
One of the many new weapons that have been made for Syndicate Wars is this Electric Gun. Looks fab, non?

BY: EA OUT: MARCH PRICE: £44.99

WARS

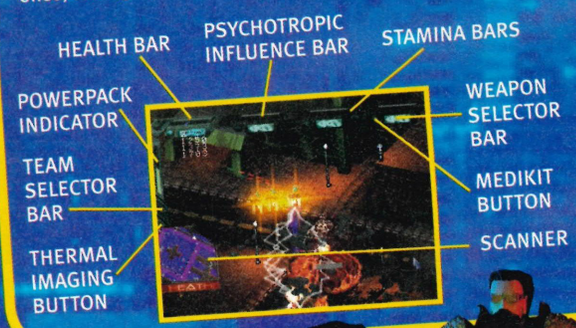
FORGIVE ME FATHER, FOR I HAVE SINNED!

The original Syndicate only gave you the choice of playing as one character from The Corporation. This time however, as well as being able to play as one of the aforementioned agents, you can now switch sides and become a Church Elder. Basically, these are the people whose memory chips have corrupted and have broken away from the normal humans. Your task as the robe wearing dude, is to convert everyone to your religion, thus weakening the order established by EuroCorp and try to bring some sense into the world. So there we go!



PAY ATTENTION CLASS!

Although the action is firmly centred on destruction, there's a high element of strategy in Syndicate Wars as well. And as a result, lots of information needs to be displayed on-screen at once, taking up the minimum amount of space.



CITIZEN KANE!

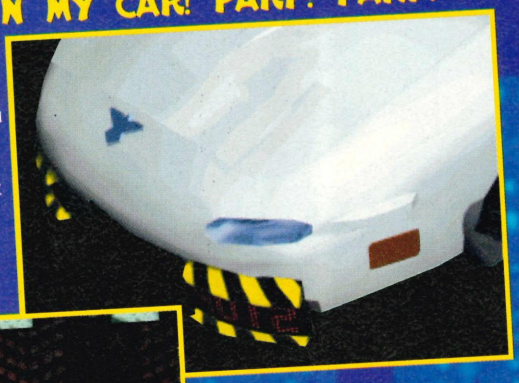
In a city the size as this there are going to be lots of pedestrians and civilians, but not all of them are the fresh faced, innocent looking people you bump into on yer average high street – Waltham Abbey aside – Class 'C' citizens are the harmless ones, whose chips haven't yet gone up the spout... yet! But the Class-U fellas ARE a little more dangerous. These are the mental cases, and are easily spotted, as they dress like old punk rockers and bikers! Your aim is simple: pump their asses full of lead! Also wandering about are fellow agents, police and EuroCorp security men.

BOK!! The fantastic BOK! Cannon proves once again it is the most destructive gun ever! BOK!

PREVIEW

I LIKE DRIVING IN MY CAR! PARP! PARP!

There are over a dozen or so cars and vehicles in SW, and you can use all of them! The range of futuristic craft is quite large, so you can acquire anything from a taxi or a punk-bike to armoured trucks, personnel carriers and twin-rocket firing siege tanks. Getting caught up in a gunfight with one of these heavy duty suckers is not recommended! So watch it!



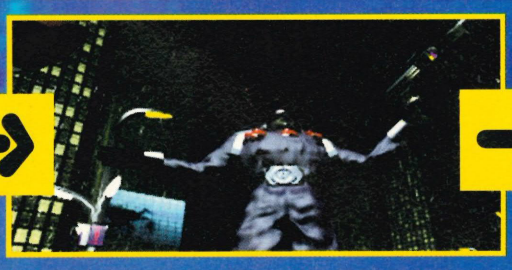
"Zis is za Police. Cam out wiz yor 'ands opp, drop your veapons and ve vill 'ave no trouble. Iz zat clear? You're all under avest!"

CITY OF ANGELS...

To say that this is pretty big game would be an understatement, as SW contains over thirty different stages! These all vary in size and difficulty with the destinations changing as you progress. Later stages see you reach spaceports before finally heading towards the moon for the hardest levels! Each of these stages features realistic lighting from street lamps and the like, but if you prefer to sly around in the darkness, pop a bulb out of the suckers!

I'M MISSION YOU ALREADY!

They say that variety is the spice of life, and because the mission objectives differ from city to city, it very definitely applies here! On an eliminate level, for example, you may have to burst into an enemy base or building and destroy everything in site. A persuade mission is a little trickier, whereby you have to locate a person and talk them round to your side before working back to the base. Escort/protect sees you guiding an important diplomat to a safe house, and an acquire mission is basically you having to infiltrate an enemy base and pick up an object before escaping. The final objective is escape, and sees you being thrown into a white hot mission area where you have to get the hell out before your own butt gets toasted, but still destroying a few enemies in the process!

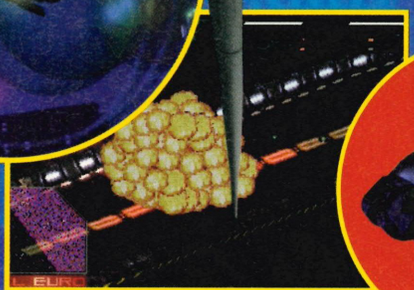


Doesn't that crater the explosion left look like a good place to work? Yes, it is truly lovely.

HA HA! I CAN SEE YOU!

The scanner is possibly the most important on-screen display as, without this, there's no way of telling if you're headed in the right direction. Every object or person is shown on the scanner in the form of coloured dots, telling you exactly who is standing where, and who are the people that you need to eliminate or persuade to complete the missions. For example blue dots are the old bill, green ones are the Class-U Citizens and grey are normal citizens.

And from the sky he came, the great Cheese Boulder Man! Well it looked funny at first...



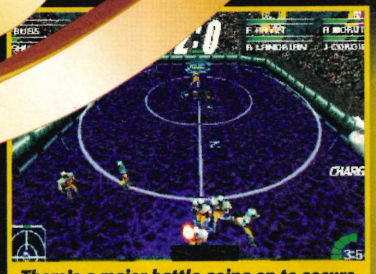
Here he is again! This time Cheese Boulder man is off to Kwik Save to meet other nibbles!

PREVIEW

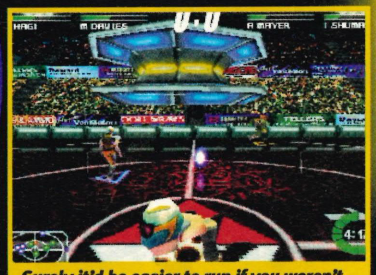
RIOT

Lately we've had a flurry of futuristic sports sims, Pitball and Blast Chamber to name but two. Well, now it's time for Psygnosis to enter the fray with their attempt to realise the sport of the future...

Since James Caan zipped up his roller-boots and took his perm out onto the futuristic roller-tracks of the United States in Rollerball, practically every softie house has been trying to find the perfect sport of the future to bring to life. If yer not rotating around cuboid landscapes avoiding traps then you're scrapping against aliens and robots in outer-space trying your best to throw an orb, of some bizarre nature, into a tiny hole – sound familiar anyone? If the trend continues expect some bright spark to bring us titles like Cyber Pigeon Mucker 2010, a game where you control a flock of racing pigeons, all equipped with deadly droppings which you must release onto virtual pedestrians and cyber cars. Meanwhile, your mechanical flock must avoid capture from the evil Robo-Curry King who tries to ensnare your flying rats and transform them into Korma! Hmm. Perhaps it won't happen and that's why I don't develop games. Ah well, let's check out Riot then...



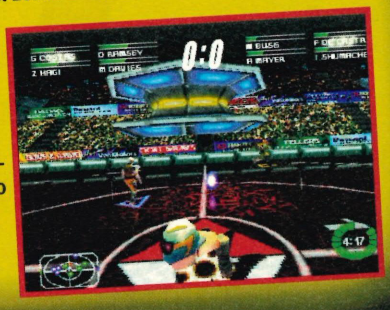
There's a major battle going on to secure possession and charge-up that orb!



Surely it'd be easier to run if you weren't slipping on giant Dairylea triangles?

WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE GAME THEN?

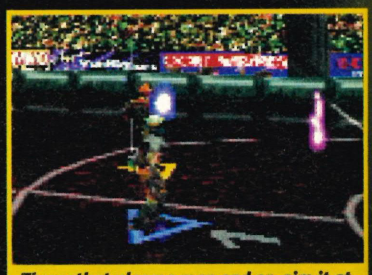
The basic object of Riot is to throw a glistening globe into the goal in the centre of the court. This may sound easy, but before any of your broken-nosed bruisers can throw said flaming orb into the goal, they have to penetrate their opposition's territory and reach the other side of the court, to a special zone. Once there, your meatballs have to charge the orb up and then head for the goal. Obviously this could get a little confusing, so when possession changes, so does the colour of the orb. Clever little thing innit!



It's a bit like 'It's A Knock-out' really. All we need is stuart Hall's stupid laugh!

SPORT IS DEAD! LONG LIVE SPORT!

Wanna know why Riot's the most popular sport in the future? Well, let me tell you sports fans. Ahem – clear throat and do an impression of that Hollywood voice-over bloke – It was a time of heroes. No it wasn't, it's the 21st Century and due to the massive cash injections given to Riot as a sport, all major stars are defecting from their natural sports like Basketball and Ice Hockey and are being seduced by the mega-bucks of Riot. Apparently, football is dead, ice-hockey is dead and boxing is dead. But so are Cannon and Ball, the Crankies and the Chuckle Brothers... so flippin' what!



Throw that plasma man and er, aim it at that goal thing with teeth. Gnash!

MEET THE GANG!

There are 15 differing sides for you to choose from in Riot. They hail from all over the globe and come from places as exotic as Berlin, Leningrad, Osaka and Liverpool. Hmm, maybe not but who's gonna argue with a team of ex-boxers that go by the name of the Dockers. Anyway, each side's merits are judged by overall accuracy, power, speed and stamina, but these can be altered as you can adjust each players stats to a style of play that suits your preferences.

I GET THE POINT!

Another thing to consider when taking to the futuristic arenas within Riot is the fact that different zones grant your team varying amounts of points. It all works in a very simple manner with the closest zone being worth a solitary one point and the outside ring scoring a thrilling three. And to make life even easier, the zones and their relevant pointages are displayed on court. Even your thick lumps of gristle and muscle will be able to get their heads around this, probably!

MIXIN' IT UP!

A sport with the amount of cash at stake like Riot guarantees a high level of violence. So, if you can't win the ball fairly or squarely, then it's time for fisticuffs! It's pretty tough to floor an opponent with one blow – although a power-up might just do it – but crack 'em three or four times repeatedly and they're on the deck in no time!

BLIMP-CAM VIEW

VIEW DO YOU DO!

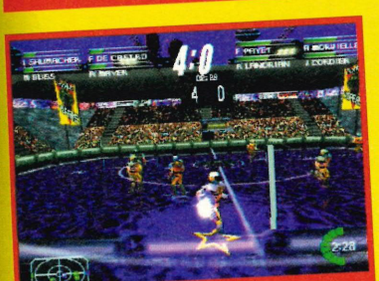
Not only does Riot boast an eight-player multi-tap game, but it also features 24 – count 'em – points from which to view your fun. We haven't got space to look at 'em all, so here's as many as we could squeeze onto our overworked pages. Enjoy.

TV-CAM HIGH VIEW

TV-CAM LOW VIEW

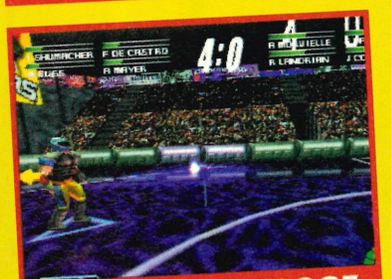
X-RAIL CAM VIEW

X-RAIL CAM LOW



Z-CAM VIEW LOW

Z-CAM VIEW MEDIUM



Z-CAM VIEW CLOSE

Z-RAIL CAM HIGH

BLIMP-CAM LOW

BLIMP-CAM HIGH

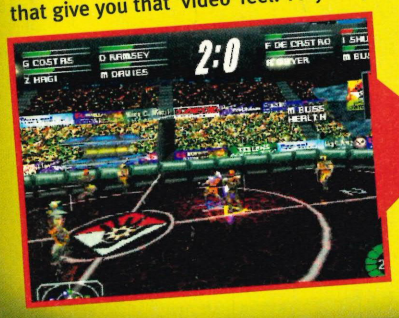
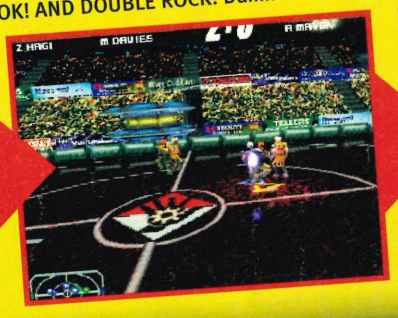
Z-RAIL CAM CLOSE

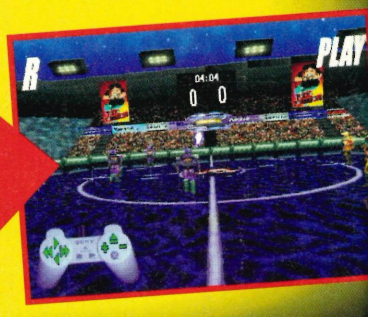
Z-RAIL CAM MEDIUM

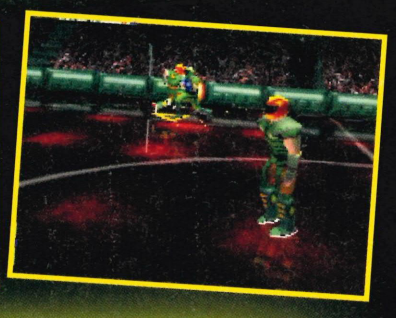
PREVIEW RIOT

REPLAY-TASTIC!

Not only does Riot feature a veritable wealth – old mags beware – of camera angles it also boasts as many different ways to view your action-replays. So, you can capture your best shots, steals and punches from practically any angle you desire. Plus, when you fast-forward or rewind your action replay, little lines appear on-screen that give you that 'video' feel. Very sexy. BOK! AND DOUBLE ROCK! Damn back to immaturity once more!

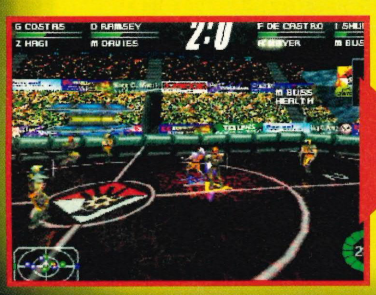







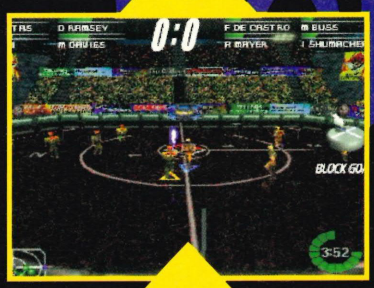
SO-O-O-U-U-R-R-C-C-E-E-E!!!

Well light-sourcing actually, 'cos Riot features some beautiful use of the PlayStation's lighting hardware. As you run downfield, the ground below illuminates and then falls into shadow as you tank along. Likewise when the plasma orb makes contact with the side of the court, sparkling rays of light brighten the arena momentarily. Ah, forsooth. One doth feel illuminated to the lofty eminence of those publications that believe they pander to the intellectual needs of the older PlayStation reader!



GAME FOR A LAUGH?

As with just about every sports game on the market, there's a range of different competitions to mix it up in. Just fancy a little kick-about and you can indulge in, what's laughingly called, a 'Friendly'. Get interested in something longer-term and you can enjoy a league set up that'll take the endurance of thirty games. Finally, there's the cup option that can involve up to 16 mates, all you'll need is an incredibly large room to put 'em all in!



Tennis

Between Two People

Is A

Beautiful

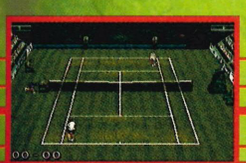
Thing

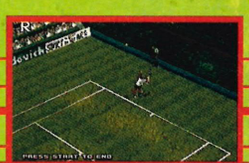
Between

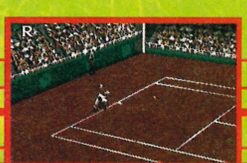
Eight

It's

Incredible.







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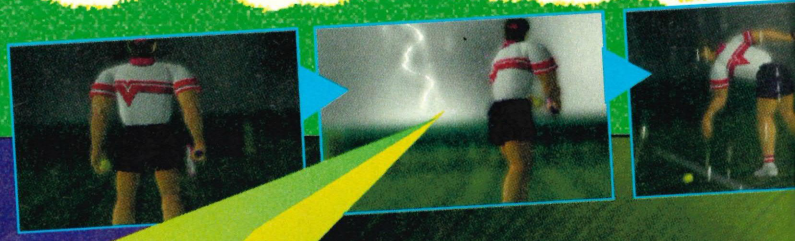
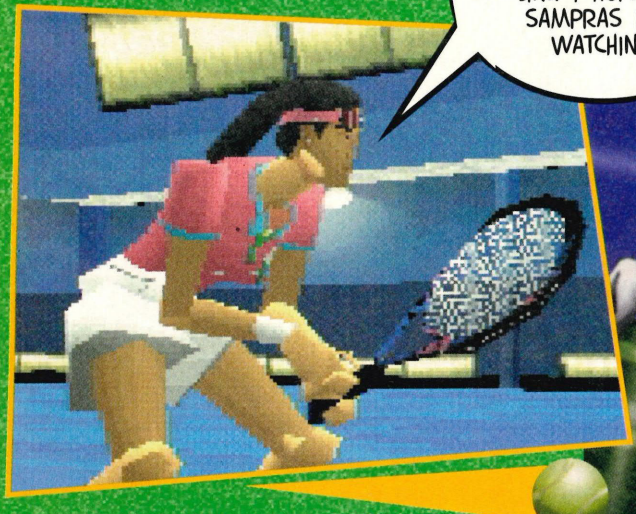
PREVIEW

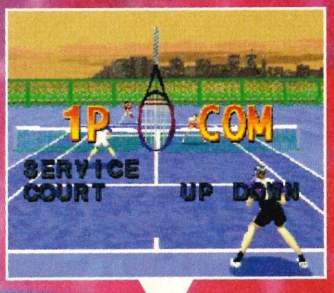


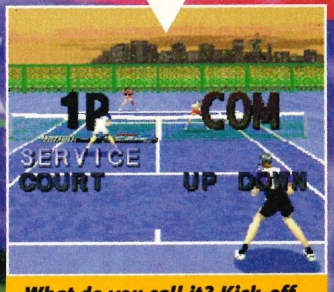
Tennis

Just when you thought the world didn't need another tennis game, up pop Acclaim with their offering to all you La Coste and Ellesse wearing casuals out there in clay court land. Thirty seconds per-lease ladies...

Welcome, ladies and gents to centre court... again. Why are there so many tennis titles emerging from the cyber changing rooms of Cyberwimbledon at the moment? Is it just chance. Is tennis that popular a sport, in computer form and real-life, that the public demands this volume of product, or is it that they're wee easy to produce (all development teams please don't pull what hair you've left out, we're only asking!). Anyway, whatsoever the reason might be, it's Acclaim's turn to slip into the tennis attire and to deliver us a big dollop of wrist action.



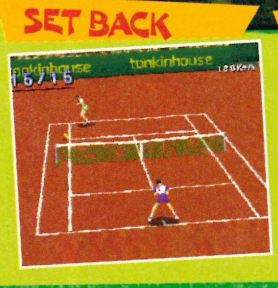


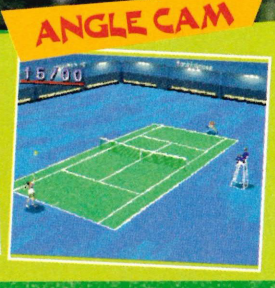


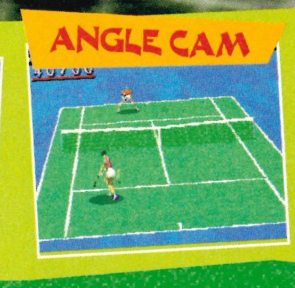
What do you call it? Kick-off, put in or what? New balls!

VIEW DO U DO?

If V-Tennis has one thing it's plenty of views to play from. There are nine in total, plus a rather original Edit facility that lets you customise your own view via a remote camera that you manipulate – matron! – until you're entirely happy with your tennis. As with all these multiple-view games though, some are grossly unplayable and not even worth looking at. While you'll find your own 'special' view that you prefer, have a little shuffty over this lot...







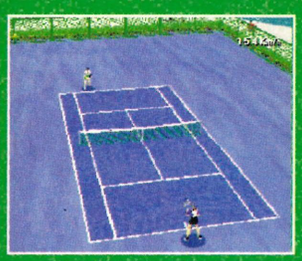
BY: ACCLAIM OUT: JANUARY PRICE: £44.99

SILENCE ON COURT!

Name me a tennis title that doesn't provide you budding Sampras' a range of courts and I'll show you a game that's pants!

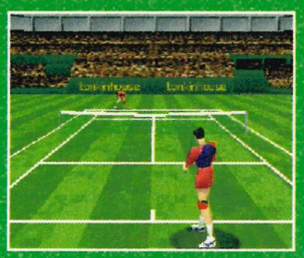
HARD COURT

A concrete surface that gives the ball extra bounce and you a little more time. Be careful not to scuff your little polygon knees when you dive on this sucker! Youch!



LAWN COURT

Grass makes the ball slide low and takes all the height out of most shots. Best played by your big Boris Becker type chaps who specialise in serve and volley games.

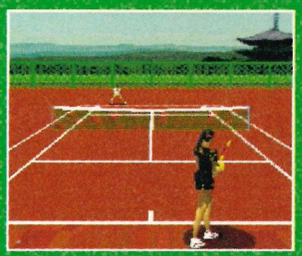


CARPET COURT

Tennis on shag-pile? You got it. You can only play this surface indoor, otherwise the carpet goes soggy! The ol' shag pile takes all the pace out of the ball. It's those twisted fibres!

CLAY COURT

Clay slows the ball down dramatically and takes time to get used to. Those players out there in Wimbledon land who favour the ground strokes will have the edge on this court.

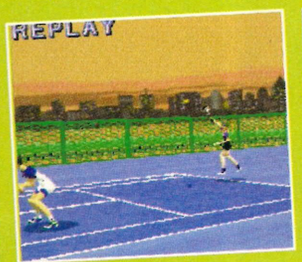


COURT IN THE ACT!

When you're a top pro – male or female – travel becomes your middle name and long arduous plane flights become a formality. Before you collect your tickets for your long-haul journey, let's take a glimpse at the Thomas Cook book of tennis locations...

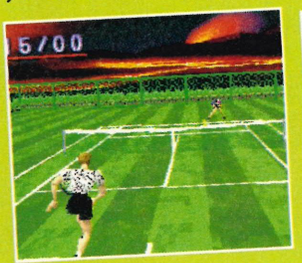
NEW YORK

Take to the court in Harlem and find that your strides have been stolen off your seat between sets!



KILAVEA

Anyone for tennis around a volcano. This sucker could blow any moment and leave you covered in molten lava!

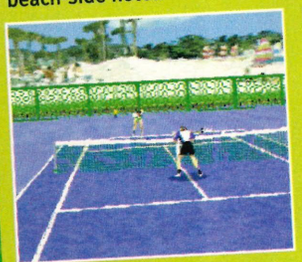


STADIUM

Plenty of seats to put bums on and a beautiful lawn surface. You couldn't ask for a nicer surface to play on.

FIJI

What better way to play tennis than in the blazing sunshine. If you can afford the beach-side hotel.

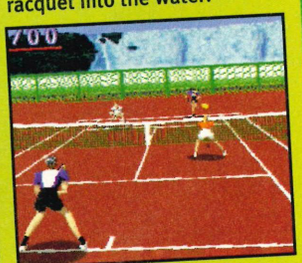


JAPAN

Obviously a game with Japanese origins is going to have a court that resides in the Rising Sun.

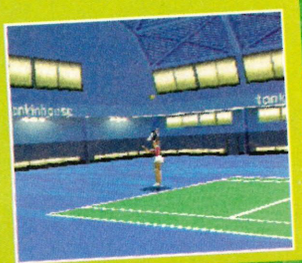
NIAGARA FALLS

Baggsy not fetch the ball when it spoons off the edge of your Dunlop Green Flash racquet into the water!



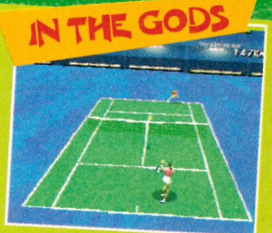
INDOOR

The only place in the world where you can play tennis on carpet – bring slippers!



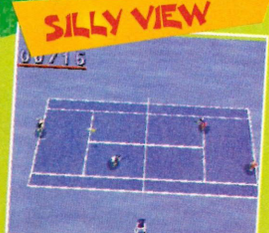
HI-CAM

IN THE GODS



BASELINE

SILLY VIEW



PREVIEW

Missed Guy Fawkes night? Want some huge fireworks do you? Well take a gander at Bedlam, it's got more explosive action than a vindaloo addict's trousers!

Rats! What kind of game has rats as their heroes? Fair enough, we've had other representatives of the animal kingdom in Mickey Mouse and Crash Bandicoot, but rats? These games companies are just going too far! Well worry not dear reader, for these are no ordinary rats, but stonking great robots armed to the teeth who just happen to be called er, rats. Just think what we could have in the future! Nuclear hamsters, cyborg geese, radioactive hedgehogs, sonic squirrels or maybe even ninja turtles – that sounds familiar. But enough of this tish, on with the display of mayhem that is Bedlam!

BEDLAM

LETHAL WEAPONS!

This is what we want, guns, guns and more guns! As well as rockets, mines, bombs... basically if it makes things blow up, it's here! And don't forget, for that special mega-destructive feeling, all your ammo can be selected to fire simultaneously! Now all you have to do is choose your weapons!

ROCKET PACK

What could be more delightful for a high-speed barbecue than these Roman candles of destruction? Sadly, you don't get many, so save them for your worst enemies.

PLASMA CANNON

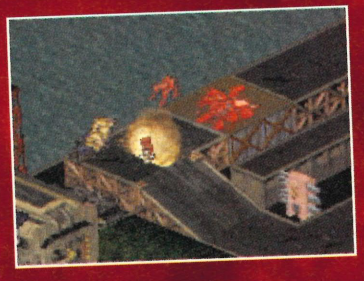
Your basic common or garden raygun of electric death, this is your best all-round weapon, so grab one of these. And do it sharpish.

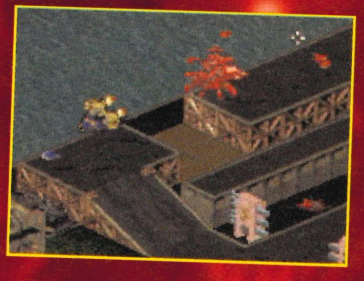
PROXIMITY MINES

Looking just the same as the standard mines but even more sneaky, the proximity versions detonate when anything just gets near them. Closer! Closer!

NEEDLER CANNON

Send invisible chaingun death to your enemies with these ace ultra-powerful machine guns, but watch out, they chew through ammo fast!





HOT AS HELL!

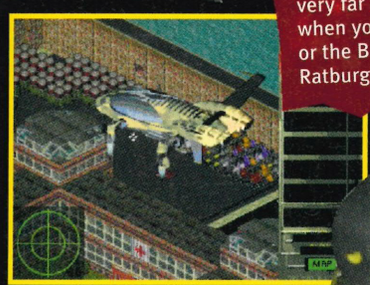
One weapon worthy of a special mention is the Hades bomb, the most powerful of your starting weapons on offer. This is a super-powerful explosive which will destroy anything dumb enough to be around when it decides to blow! They come in very short supply, but don't worry because one carefully placed bomb is all you'll need! Just pick a nice big target, drop your hellish present, stand (WELL) back and watch the fireworks! Burn baby burn!

BOK! And the quarterback is toast! Maybe not the quarterback as such, more like a huge liner with guns. And lights. And it's sinking!

RED ALERT!

When things are getting too rough for you in the battle, grab hold of the special star-shaped beserker power-up and cackle with glee as the screen goes red and your Rat goes mental! Temporarily invincible and armed with HUGE rockets you can wreak as much havoc as you want, creating high-speed destruction with the simple touch of a button! Just make sure you're very far away from the action when your power trip is over or the Bio-mechs will make Ratburgers out of you!

"Look ma! It's me! I'm on the television and ya' can all see me now! Yoo-hoo, I'm on the telly and I've plopped me pants!

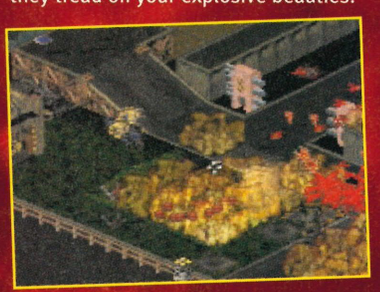


STICKY GRENADES

These are grenades which stick to your enemy when thrown. Well, what did you think sticky grenades would do?

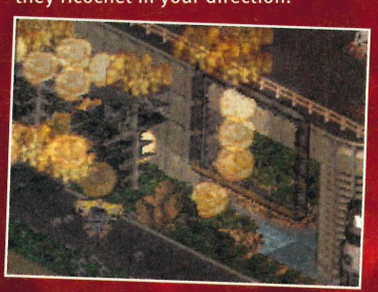
PRESSURE MINES

Stop the Bio-mechs in their tracks by laying these mines everywhere. Watch the baddies disappear in flames when they tread on your explosive beauties!

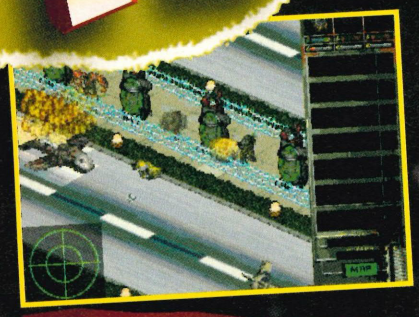


BOUNCY GRENADES

If the sticky grenades were sticky, what do you think these will do? That's right, now watch out in case they ricochet in your direction!



PREVIEW



The laser fence can be de-activated by shooting the relevant terminals, which, unfortunately, aren't in this shot. But we don't want to spoil everything!

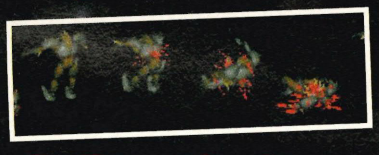
YOUR MISSION, SHOULD YOU BE MAD ENOUGH TO ACCEPT IT...

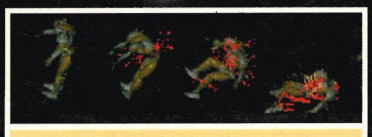
Once you've chosen your weapons, you'll need to know just what to shoot at. So after choosing which of the missions in your current zone you want to take on, step into the briefing room. Here you'll be shown a level map telling you which innocent buildings, vehicles and factories to destroy in order to complete your objectives. Once you've made your decision, head to the armoury, and grab as much weaponry as you can afford. You'll get more money as you complete the missions, and eventually you'll have access to the top secret classified weaponry! Heh-heh-heh!

UNDER THE INFLUENCE!

Hands off that Start button! There's two very good reasons to check out Bedlam's rendered intro. One, because it looks great, and secondly in order to spot which sci-fi TV shows and films have influenced the boys and girls at Mirage while they were making it. (Which is not to suggest the Mirage boys and girls are ever 'under the influence' of anything, of course. Perish the thought, boss!). Anyway, they have included a Babylon 5 spaceship, one of those Hunter-killer thingies out of Terminator 2 and even an appearance by Robocop! If they'd added a few Daleks they could have got all our favourites in... Ah well, you can't have everything. Unless your name's Richard Branson, that is.

NOW THESE ARE WHAT I CALL WINGS!!



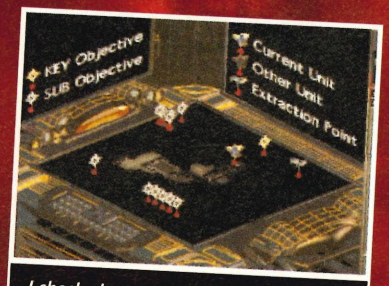


All I had was a Chicken Vindaloo, and all of a sudden, me belly fell out! Not good!

TRAVELS WITH MY RAT!

As you can see from the screen-shots, there's enough action going on in Bedlam to give you a serious violence overload. So with our usual overwhelming generosity – and modesty – we've decided to give you a helping hand. To make things easier on you we've managed to get hold of one Rat's holiday movies to show you what he did on his day trip to the airport, and how best to deal with evil robot scum in the duty-free section. Betcha Beadle won't be interested in these video japes!

After being dropped off by my taxi I headed off in search of some action.



I checked my map for places of interest and anything else that might be of use...

...and found a troublesome admin block! Say bye bye sir, your days are numbered!

I stumbled across a cargo plane that made a bloody huge bang! BOKO...

.... as well as a bunch of hangars just hanging about – groan! – nearby.

Finally I made short work of some green egg-type things – where's the ham?

Before catching a ride home to check out my holiday snaps and sip pina coladas!.

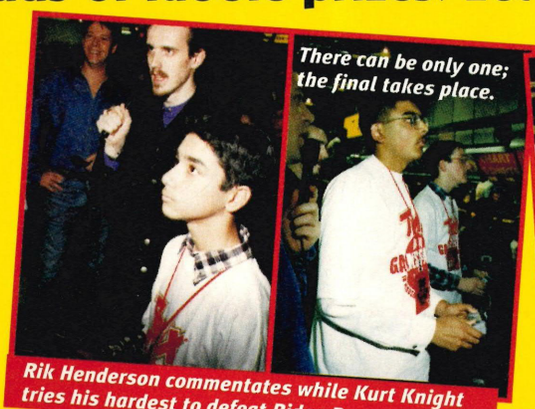
SPECIAL

Twix® Junior Gamesplayer Of The Year Challenge!

CHALLENGERS READY!

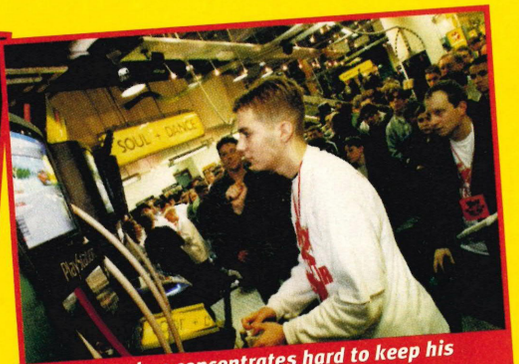
From all over the UK they came: the eight fastest Ridge Racer Revolution drivers in the country, ready on the revs to do battle for the ultimate prize – to be proclaimed the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer Of The Year and win loads of fabbie prizes! Let battle commence...

A few months back here on MMP, in collaboration with those nice folk at TWIX®, we began a search, a search for the greatest PlayStation gamer in the land! Literally hundreds of applicants wrote in with their best Ridge Racer Revolution times, each praying that they'd be one of the eight lucky grand finalists.
Although all of the entries were excellent, it was these hot 'Stationers who scorched the track and produced the fastest times – probably with the help of a TWIX® or two!
Anyway, here for your deliberation are those lucky finalists: Dean McClenaghan, Woodgate Valley, B'ham; Will Murray, Northampton; Kurt Knight, Croydon, Surrey; Dean Middleton, Leyton, London; Nicky Comben, London; Dave Dixon, Kendal, Cumbria; Rajesh Fatania, Slough, Berks; Darren Mooney, Dunstable, Beds.

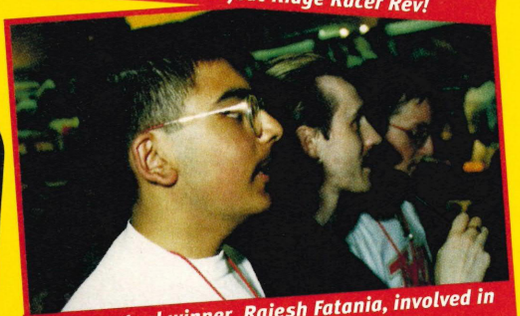


There can be only one; the final takes place.

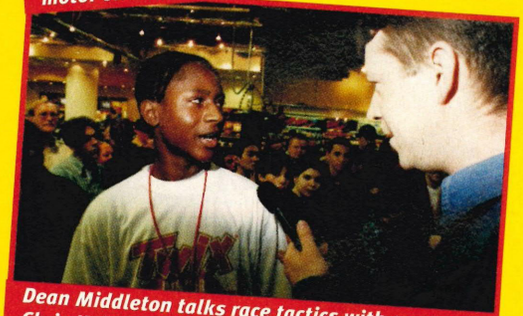
Rik Henderson commentates while Kurt Knight tries his hardest to defeat Ridge Racer Rev!



Nicky Comben concentrates hard to keep his motor on the road. Give it some lad!



Our eventual winner, Rajesh Fatania, involved in yet another Mean Machines driving duel.



Dean Middleton talks race tactics with our mate Chris Knight, before taking to the wheel!

The finals were held on Saturday, 2nd November, at the massive Virgin Megastore on London's Oxford Street. As the 2.30 pm starting time approached, you could feel the tension build in the packed store. And when the hosts, GamesMaster's Rik Henderson, Maxis' Chris Knight, and the contestants took to the stage, the crowd went wild and the challenge began!

QUARTER FINALS

NAME	TIME
Dean McClenaghan	1' 05" 490
Will Murray	1' 04" 626
Kurt Knight	1' 04" 917
Dean Middleton	1' 04" 822
Nicky Comben	1' 07" 539
Dave Dixon	1' 03" 617
Rajesh Fatania	1' 03" 803
Darren Mooney	1' 03" 340

RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION

SEMI-FINALS

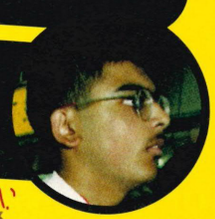
Darren Mooney
William Murray
David Dixon
Rajesh Fatania

FINAL

David Dixon
Rajesh Fatania

WINNER!

Rajesh Fatania



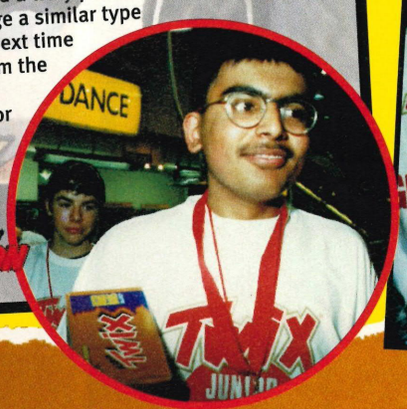
'A BREAK FROM THE NORM.'

Twix

TO THE VICTOR, THE SPOILS!

There can, of course, be only one true winner. And after three gruelling races against some awesome opponents it was Rajesh Fatania who emerged triumphant. The guy put his pedal to the medal and won himself a special TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer Of The Year medal, £250-worth of Virgin Megastore vouchers to spend as he wishes. Plus, £250 of Sony PlayStation games and a year's supply of TWIX®. The runner's-up didn't go home empty-handed either – they each won a special medal and a goody bag too! If you didn't manage to make it to the grand finals either as a competitor or a spectator, you missed a truly phenomenal event! Next year we're hoping to stage a similar type of games challenge, so next time why not take a break from the norm and see if you can become the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer Of The Year!

RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION



PRIZE GUYS!

A big thanks goes out to all the people who helped make the TWIX® Junior Gamesplayer Of The Year challenge such a great success. Particularly Sony Computer Entertainment, AD Vision and Acclaim.

TWIX® is a registered trademark of Mars UK Ltd.

PREVIEW

What about this! A game that lets you make loads of mess, bash people over the head with a mallet, AND destroy buildings! Wackaday comes to the PlayStation, without Timmy Mallet! Hurrah.

From the moment we're born, we destroy things. Why else would Sticklebricks and Lego have been made? National Lampoons took it one stage further and made loads of crappy films about stupid, bumbling Americans who made things collapse. For some people this wave of destruction continues a long way into life – if you've ever met NMS' Phil Dawson, you'll know what I'm talking about! – as they find themselves accidentally breaking the Internet or something of equal importance. With these clumsy people in mind, Warner are offering the chance to do lots of damage in the comfort of your very own home — providing your abode hasn't fallen down already — with Trash-It. The first ever smash-'em-up for the PlayStation. BOK!

TRASH

HERE COMES THE HAMMER!

Knocking things down is the name of the game, so the hammers you carry are (and this is the clever bit) going to play a pretty big part. Thankfully, there's a fair old selection to choose from – thirty of the blighters! – and these are obtained from (where else but) the Hammer Shop! Each hammer has it's own stats, such as the splat range and destructive power, and are grouped into sets of three — the third group being the most powerful with magical powers. They don't make hammers like that anymore, do they?

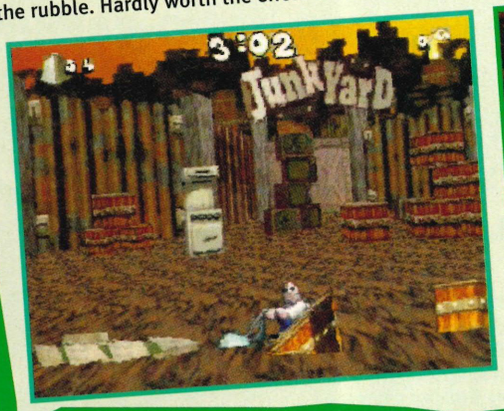
Ladders fill the multi-player games and are, er... great. Fun. No, really.

BY: WARNER INTERACTIVE OUT: FEBRARY PRICE: £44.99

IT

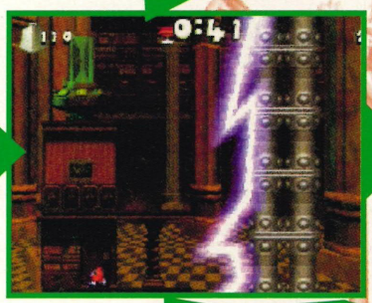
TIIIIIMMMMM BEERRRRRRRRRR!

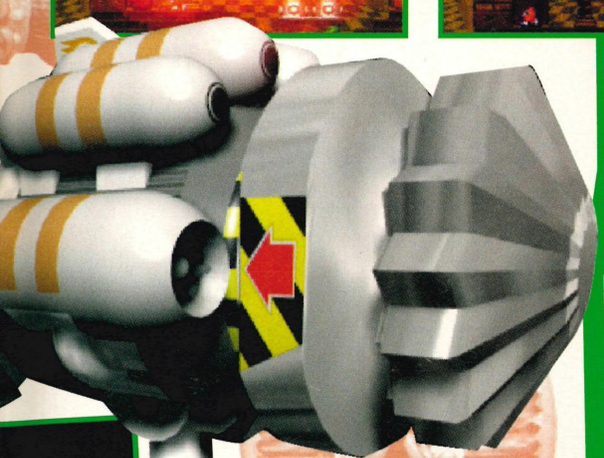
Destroying the buildings is obviously an integral part of the game, but some will be easier to crumble than others. Each tower has a weak point, usually at the base of the structure, but others require a more accurate shot. For the larger towers, a shot around the centre with a stronger mallet will do enough damage to cause the entire thing to come tumbling down. Apparently, the developers worked out the most realistic way the walls would fall down using complex mathematics and lots professors in white suits. And all you do is hoover up the rubble. Hardly worth the effort was it?



WITH THE AWESOME POWER OF MY BOK-MALLET!

The wham-bam-thank-you-maam mallets (the super ones) all carry a special ability. When the right combination of buttons are pressed, the mallets goes into bonkers mode, and the screen fills with all manner of flash graphical touches. Once the chaos has subsided, the good news is that all of the buildings have collapsed and are waiting to be hoovered up!





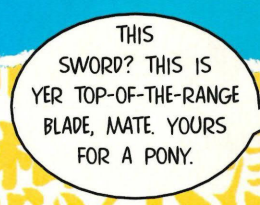
Now I do not believe you want to be standing there hitting that. Oh no.

OH YEAH, YOU WANNA HIDE!

Hook up the multi tap, and this game really kicks off! Four of you can play simultaneously, and the idea is simple. Work your way through the stage and ring the bell before anyone else. However, the other players have more of an effect on this than the computer does. If you hit someone from above as they climb a ladder, you'll knock them down. You can pick up other players and throw them off ledges and nick their hammers should they drop them. The potential for real life fights and arguments are extremely high, so be warned!

REVIEW

Suikoden



Welcome to our new 'retro-gaming' section. This month we take a look at Konami's Suikoden, an RPG for the Super NES that... Hang on, this is new and it's for the PlayStation. Mercy!

Calling lovers of all things pointy-hatted. The game you bought your PlayStation for is finally here! Yes, if you're one of those sad sorts who can think of no better way to spend a rainy Sunday afternoon than by getting some like-minded mates around, dusting off the percentile dice, and pretending you're all wizards and warriors (usually called something mad like Thrud or Melkior) battling scary monsters inside maze-like cave systems, then you'll pop your little cork over Konami's newie. You see, it's a massive role-playing game (RPG) in the classic Japanese tradition, in which you and your brave band of chums travel across a vast fantasy world righting wrongs, putting evil-doers to the sword and generally acting like a right bunch of goody-goodies. Ready to quest? Then let's rock!

I'M IN TOO DEEP!

What makes Japanese RPGs so unique is their complex, constantly evolving plots – and Suikoden is no different. You start the game as the dewy-eyed son of a famous general, following in his father's footsteps as an eager recruit to the Emperor Barbarossa's army. But accompanied by your friends, you soon discover that things aren't as they seem. The Liberation Army, portrayed as evil thugs by the Empire's propaganda machine, are in fact noble rebels fighting against Barbarossa's tyranny. Soon you must decide: do you stay loyal to the corrupt Emperor, or follow your heart and join the rebellion? (And there are no prizes for guessing the answer!)

BY: KONAMI OUT: JANUARY PRICE: £44.99

A TIME OF ADVENTURE!

Suikoden is a huge epic of a game, but fortunately it's broken down into bite-sized mini-quests during which the bigger picture eventually emerges. These mini-quests usually involve travelling somewhere, and then either delivering something to someone or battling through a dungeon in search of a special treasure. Thanks to the game's excellent design, it's always obvious what you have to do next so you'll rarely (if ever) get stuck or lost – in fact, at times it's all a little too straightforward and restricts your freedom.

WHAT A CHARACTER!

During the course of this massive saga, you'll meet many odd characters – most of whom will try and eat your face. However, those who don't can generally be recruited to your merry band of heroes. In all there are 108 possible companions, but as your party can only hold six members at most sooner or later you'll be forced to make some heart-rending decisions about who can stay and who has to go. Each character has their own unique skills and powers, and having the right mix in your party is essential to success.

NUMBER CRUNCHING FUN!

Every character is defined by a set of statistics – Power, Skill, Speed, Magic, etc – which controls how well they perform in battle; basically, the higher the numbers, the better they are. These brain-numbing stats can be reviewed using a menu system which also lets you fiddle around with loads of other stuff, like change the weapons carried and the armour worn, alter the party's formation, examine the booty collected and loads more besides. Don't worry, it's a lot easier to use than it looks, honest!

RUNES'LL KEEP YA REGULAR!

Magic is a big thing in Suikoden. To use it you must first find a Rune, special mystical symbols hidden in remote places throughout the world. Then, once a character has activated a Rune, he or she can use it to cast all manner of awesome spells- depending on the Rune. These majicks are best saved for those really tough encounters, and they look flinkin' amazing in action!

Who's cast a spell? Come on, own up! Who did that?

Here comes another just like the other. Da-da da-da da!

By the gods! Attacked by a bunch of foxes in drag! Damn!

REVIEW

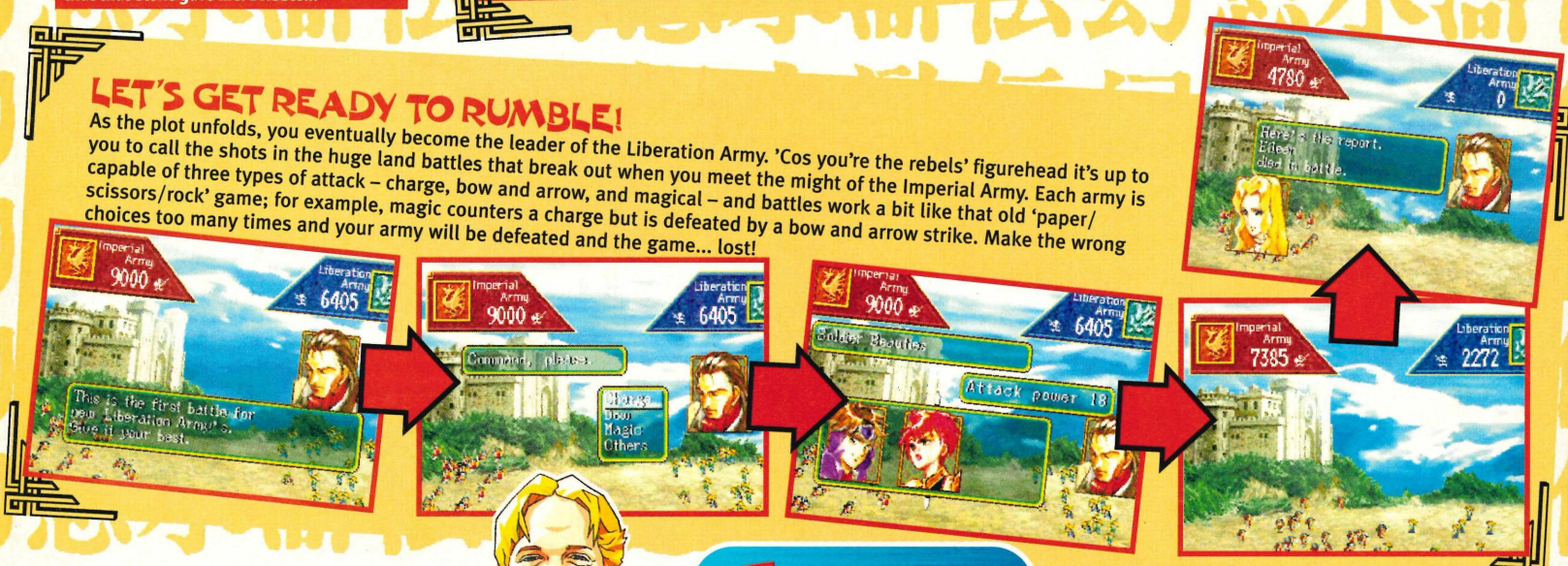
I should have never eaten that dodgy stuff that that bloke gave me. Dribble...

PUT 'EM TO THE SWORD!

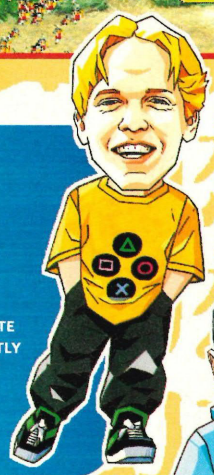
Encounters with bands of marauding nasties occur randomly. There you are, happily wandering about, when BANG! you're in a fight. These rucks occur on a special 3D screen, which rotates and zooms in and out to heighten the drama. You control your fighters using another menu system, which lets you order your brave lads to attack, defend, use magic or an item from their backpacks, or link up with their team mates to perform a special combination attack. If you're feeling cowardly you can opt to run away, while if you're feeling lazy you can let the characters fight on their own.

LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE!

As the plot unfolds, you eventually become the leader of the Liberation Army. 'Cos you're the rebels' figurehead it's up to you to call the shots in the huge land battles that break out when you meet the might of the Imperial Army. Each army is capable of three types of attack – charge, bow and arrow, and magical – and battles work a bit like that old 'paper/scissors/rock' game; for example, magic counters a charge but is defeated by a bow and arrow strike. Make the wrong choices too many times and your army will be defeated and the game... lost!

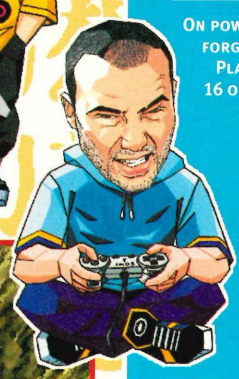


STEVE COMMENT



I LIKE AN RPG NOW AND AGAIN, AND I WAS QUITE LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS. AND I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT I AM NOT DISAPPOINTED! FOR ONE IT IS A VERY NICE LOOKING GAME, AND THE WAY THE CHARACTERS DEVELOP AND LEARN SPELLS KEEPS ENJOYMENT LEVELS HIGH. THIS'LL BE A GOOD BENCHMARK FOR RPGS TO COME.

SIMON COMMENT



ON POWERING UP SUIKODEN YOU'D BE FORGIVEN FOR THINKING THAT YOUR PLAYSTATION HAD SUDDENLY LOST 16 OF ITS BITS! IT'S TRUE! A FEW OF THE FLASHIER SPECIAL EFFECTS AND THE IN-BATTLE PANNING AND ZOOMING ASIDE, THIS LOOKS IDENTICAL TO THE SORT OF FODDER THAT KEPT RPG-LOVING FANS OF NINTENDO'S CREAKY OLD FLAGSHIP HAPPY. BUT AS FAR AS GAMEPLAY GOES THERE'S NOTHING WRONG. SUIKODEN PLAYS GREAT (ALTHOUGH THE IRRITATING FREQUENCY OF CHANCE ENCOUNTERS IS ANNOYING) AND THE PLOT IS DEEP (IF A TOUCH TOO LINEAR). NOT ONE TO SHOW OFF THE PSX'S POWER THOUGH!

Why-oh-why did I listen to that bloke again! remember kids, winners don't use drugs – even when they're poorly!

OVERALL

IF YOU CAN IGNORE THE FACT THAT SUIKODEN LOOKS AND FEELS MORE LIKE A 16-BIT PORT THAN A 'REAL' PLAYSTATION GAME, YOU'LL GET HOURS OF ENJOYMENT OUT OF THIS RPG.

ALTERNATIVES

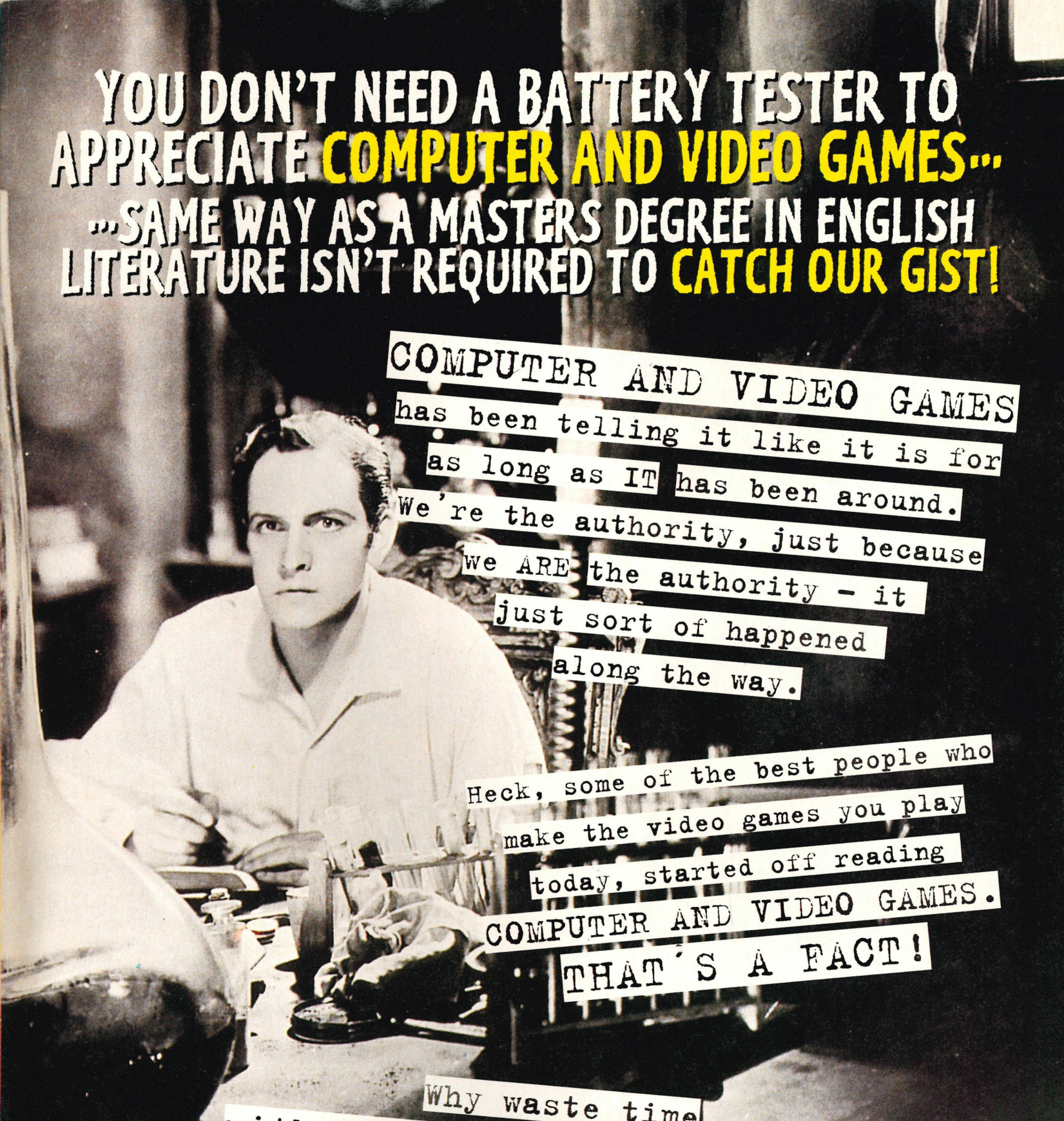
NONE TO SPEAK OF AT THE MOMENT!

82 SOUNDS	81 ANIMATION
72 GRAPHICS	82 PLAYABILITY

81

YOU DON'T NEED A BATTERY TESTER TO APPRECIATE COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES...

...SAME WAY AS A MASTERS DEGREE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE ISN'T REQUIRED TO CATCH OUR GIST!



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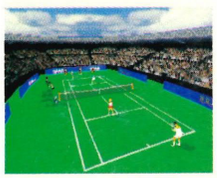

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